

MORAL INSTRUCTION SERIES

THE GARDEN OF CHILDHOOD

BY
ALICE M. CHERTERTON



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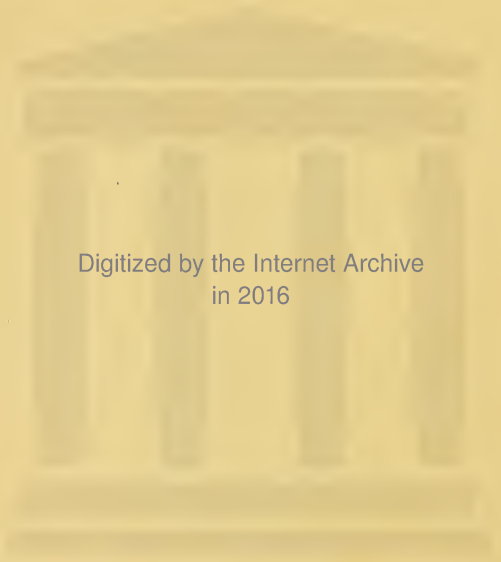
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THE GARDEN OF CHILDHOOD

STORIES FOR LITTLE FOLK AT SCHOOL
AND AT HOME

BY

ALICE M. CHESTERTON

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
GERTRUDE M. BRADLEY



THOMAS NELSON AND SONS
London, Edinburgh, Dublin, and New York

*This volume has been prepared with the sanction and
in accordance with the Syllabus of the
Moral Instruction League.*

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PREFACE.

THIS book has been written to illustrate the lessons outlined for Infants in the "Graduated Syllabus of Moral Instruction for Elementary Schools," * issued by the Moral Instruction League; but, though specially arranged for that section, many of the stories would also be suitable for children in Standards I. and II. It is my sincere hope that, whilst listening to a story, the children will feel touched by the lesson it seeks to embody, without realizing that a lesson is being imparted. In telling or reading the stories I would ask that the moral be not forced upon the little ones, or even emphasized, by the teacher; though it would be well for her to ask a few questions afterwards, as to which child or deed the little listeners have a fondness for, and the reason why.

The aim of the book is to provide instruction and amusement at the same time, so that the children hardly know which is which, and enjoy both.

Several of the stories have appeared in the *Daily News*. For the ideas in "The Difficult Sum" and "The Land of Books and Toys" I am indebted to Miss Jane Carey; to whom I am glad to proffer my thanks for testing the stories upon a class of infants in a public elementary school. I owe much also to my little critic, "Dulcie." A. M. C.

* See Appendix.

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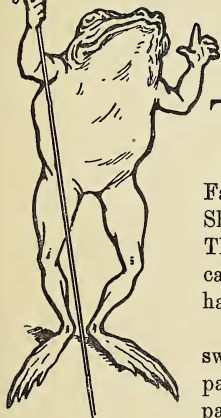
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The SECRET OF THE GOLDEN CASTLE



I

THERE was once a castle in which the Grey Fairy lived. She was called the Grey Fairy because she wore a grey frock. She lived in a castle made all of gold. There were so many rooms in that castle that I am sure you would never have time to count them all.

The Grey Fairy's name was Meadow-sweet, and every evening she had a party in her castle. Fancy having a party *every evening* !

Meadow-sweet asked all the children to her parties that she could think of. It did not matter to her whether they had fine or shabby clothes—she had *all* the children, the richest and the poorest.

There was a little girl who had never been to Meadow-sweet's castle of gold, and, when she heard about it from one of her friends, she went off at once and knocked at the castle door.

"If you please," she said to the frog who opened the door, "can I see the Grey Fairy ?"

"Come this way," said the frog; and off he hopped up the golden staircase, and the little girl had to run quite fast to keep up with him.

They went through room after room, the frog

hopping and the little girl running, till at last they came to a doorway with golden curtains over it.

The frog lifted up one of the curtains, and said :
“ Walk in.”

Nancy—that was the name of the little girl—went in, and found herself in a very large room, larger than any she had ever seen, and it was quite empty.

“ Are you going to leave me here alone ? ” she asked the frog.

“ Yes ; I must go back to the front door in case any other children come. You are not afraid to be left alone, are you ? ”

“ Oh no ! not afraid,” said Nancy ; “ but I think I shall feel rather lonely.”

“ The Grey Fairy will be here directly,” he said, and he hopped off downstairs.

Nancy walked about in the great big room all alone, and she looked at the great big walls and the great big windows and the long floor and the high ceiling, and she felt a very small girl indeed. She almost began to wish she had not come.

Just as she was wishing that, the Grey Fairy appeared.

“ Well, little girl, and who are you ? ” asked the fairy.

“ I am Nancy, and, if you please, I wanted to come to your party. I put on my party dress ; but I think I had better go home, because it is not a nice enough one for this beautiful room, and it makes me feel shy being here.”

“ Oh, but it is a very nice dress,” said the fairy. “ It is so neat and tidy, and has no holes in it. I like to see a dress like that.”

“Do you?”

“Yes. And you need not feel shy; you shall stand by me when the children come, and then you can have a good look at them all, and see which ones you would like to play with.”

“That will be nice,” said Nancy. “Are you the Grey Fairy?”

“Yes. You must call me Meadow-sweet. That is the name of a flower, you know, and I like to be called by that name.”

“It is a pretty name,” said Nancy. “Do you live here alone?”

“Oh no! there are lots of fairies here, and some frogs, and several mice.”

“Oh dear!” said Nancy in dismay.

“Well, but why not? Frogs and mice are dear little creatures. They are my servants. You did not mind my frog Thomas, who opened the door, did you?”

“No,” said Nancy.

“Then you need not mind the mice either. See, here they come.”

Sure enough, in came five mice. They walked up to Meadow-sweet, and bowed their heads very solemnly.

“Is everything ready?” asked the fairy.

“Everything, dear lady.”

“The food all on the table?”

“Yes, sweet lady,” answered the mice.

“And the frogs’ band?”

“Yes, dear lady.”

“What is the frogs’ band?” asked Nancy.

“The frogs play music for the children to dance to,” said Meadow-sweet.

"Just like the band in the park?"

"Something like that," said the fairy; and then she asked the mice if the fairy lamps were alight.

"Yes, dear lady," answered the mice.

"Then shake hands with Nancy, she is a new little friend."

So Nancy had to shake hands with the mice; and then they went back to the door, and held up the golden curtains for the children to come in.

"You did not mind shaking hands with the mice after all, did you?" asked the fairy.

"Oh no!" said Nancy, laughing; "they are such dear little things."

"I am glad you are a sensible girl," said Meadow-sweet.

Then in came the children—oh! such a number, one after another as fast as they could come—boys and girls, some big, some little, some tiny tots who could hardly walk. Each child came to the fairy, and said: "Good-evening, Meadow-sweet"; and Meadow-sweet said to each child: "Good-evening; I am very glad to see you."

"Ah!" she said to one little boy, "I think you have made a mistake, Johnnie, haven't you?"

Suddenly Johnnie remembered that he had not taken off his cap as the other boys did when they came in. He took it off quickly.

"That is better," said Meadow-sweet. "Now, I can see a little girl who does not know how to behave," said Meadow-sweet, "although she has a pretty frock on. Pretty frocks do not hide bad manners, you know."

The little girl came running up to Meadow-sweet.



(1315)

Each child came to the fairy, and said: "Good-evening.
Meadow-sweet."

"Good-evening, Meadow-sweet," she said; "I forgot to say it before. I am so sorry."

"Do you know why you forget so often to say good-evening to me?" asked the fairy.

"No," answered the little girl.

"Because you forget at home. You never say 'Good-morning, mother,' or 'Good-morning, father,' when you come down to breakfast. Try to remember that every day *at home*, and then you will not forget when you come to my parties."

"Yes, I *will* try," said the little girl.

After all the children had said good-evening to Meadow-sweet they formed in long lines all down the room, which, as I told you, was a very big one, and the frogs' band began to play. The mice lifted up the curtains again, and the children all marched out into another room even bigger than this one. There they danced and played games and sang songs, and were very happy. All the hungry children forgot they were hungry, the unhappy children forgot they were unhappy, and the rich children forgot they were rich, and the poor children forgot they were poor—and they all played together and danced together and sang together, and were very happy.

After a time Meadow-sweet gave a sign with her wand, and the frogs and the mice and all the children went two and two right to the other end of the Golden Castle, and there in a beautiful room was a big table, the biggest table you can think of, full of nice things to eat.

Meadow-sweet said: "Sit down, children, and have your supper." So the children all sat down, and the frogs and mice came and waited on them.

Meadow-sweet sat at the top of the table and watched the children.

"Ah!" she said, "now I can soon tell which children behave nicely at home. There is one little boy with his elbows on the table. Take him away, frogs, he must have his supper alone."

The frogs took him away to another room, and gave him his supper alone.

"I can see another boy," said Meadow-sweet, "who eats as fast as ever he can himself and never looks to see if the little girl next to him would like some cakes. Take him away, frogs, he must have his supper alone."

The frogs took him to another room, and gave him his supper alone.

"There is a little girl who is putting her knife in her mouth. That is not at all pretty, and, besides, she may cut herself. Take her away, frogs, and teach her what a knife is for."

So the frogs took her away, and taught her that a knife is to cut up with and a fork is to put food in your mouth with.

When all the badly-behaved children had been taken away, Meadow-sweet and the other children finished their supper.

"It will soon be time for the fairy tree," said a little boy to Nancy.

"What is that?" asked Nancy.

"A sort of Christmas tree with fairy lights and presents. Meadow-sweet gives us each a present every night."

"How lovely!" said Nancy.

"Bring back the other children, please, frogs," said the fairy after supper was over.

When the other children had come back the mice led the way, and the children all followed with the fairy and the frogs, right up the golden staircase to the largest room of all—and there was the fairy tree that Nancy had heard about.

It was such a big tree, and so brightly lighted, it looked like a magic tree. Indeed, that is what it was, as you will soon hear.

There was a present on it for each child.

"I did not know you were coming, Nancy, so I have nothing for you," said Meadow-sweet.

"I don't mind," said Nancy.

"You shall stand by me and see the other children have their presents. Now, frogs!"

The frogs hopped on to the tree, took off the presents, and gave one to each child. Then what do you think happened? Some of the children had hardly taken their presents from the frogs when the presents flew back on to the tree.

One little boy had a box of chalks, but directly he touched it, it flew back on to the tree. A little girl had a doll, and when the frogs put it in her arms it flew back on to the tree.

Nancy thought that very strange.

"Oh, poor little children," she said as she saw how the children hung their heads and looked on the ground. "May I give them back their toys, Meadow-sweet?"

"No," said Meadow-sweet; "the children know all about my magic tree, and they know why their toys have flown away."

"Do they?" said Nancy.

"Yes; they know. Perhaps to-morrow they can have their presents back again. Now, frogs, tell the children about to-morrow."

The frogs stood up in a row, and said: "The Grey Fairy, who lives in this Golden Castle, invites you all to a party at seven o'clock to-morrow. She wants all the little children to take their manners home with them to-night. That is to say, she wants them all to remember to behave nicely at home and at school—just as nicely as they have to behave when they come here. She hopes all the children will remember that to-morrow, so that none of the toys will fly back on to the magic tree."

Nancy was very surprised, but all the children seemed to understand.

"Good-bye, children," said Meadow-sweet.

"Good-bye, Meadow-sweet," said the children, "and we thank you very much for the party."

Then the children formed into lines, and marched away right downstairs, and out at the golden door, and away to their homes. Meadow-sweet said to Nancy: "I watched you at supper-time, and saw that you sat up straight and ate your food nicely and thought about the other children as well as yourself. I was very pleased."

Nancy was glad to hear Meadow-sweet say that—it was even nicer than having a present.

"Now, shall I tell you about my magic tree?" asked the fairy.

"Yes, please," said Nancy.

"It is magic because it knows all about the children. When they forget to say 'Thank you' or 'Please' at

home and at school the tree knows ; and when they forget to say ' Good-morning ' to their teachers, or are rude to their mothers, or call their sisters and brothers ugly names, the tree knows quite well. So, you see, it is a magic tree."

" Yes," said Nancy. " Is that why the toys fly back?"

" Yes," said Meadow-sweet. " But the children who come to my parties soon learn what the magic tree means, and they try to remember."

" I think they must love you very much," said Nancy.

" I hope so," said Meadow-sweet; " for I love them too, or you may be sure I should not have them to my parties. And now I will send you home in my magic coach, because it is time you were in bed."

" Good-bye, Meadow-sweet," said Nancy, " and thank you very much for this lovely party."

" Good-bye," said the fairy; and Nancy went home in the golden coach.

" I do not mind so much about the presents," said Nancy to herself, " but I shall try never to have mine fly back on the tree, because I want to please Meadow-sweet."

Frog Thomas, who was driving the coach, said : " She has not been long learning the secret of the Golden Castle. The Grey Fairy likes everyone to try to please her. She likes everyone to learn happily all that she teaches them. For the Grey Fairy has two names—one is Meadow-sweet, as you know, and the other is Duty. She is called Duty because she knows all the things that children ought to do, and children must love Meadow-sweet before they can learn all she has to teach them."

Nancy was very surprised when she heard that.

The LAND where there are NO Punishments.

II



THERE was once a country where no child was ever punished. However naughty children were, however disobedient, still they were never punished. The law of the land would not allow it. Something else happened instead. In the night, when the naughty children were in bed asleep, two beautiful birds came and carried them away to fairyland, and brought them back in the morning in time to wake up.

I daresay you think that was very much nicer than being punished. Well, gener-

ally, the naughty children woke up quite cured of their naughtiness.

I will tell you about Geoffrey and Daisy, who lived in this strange country with their mother and father.

They were good children on the whole, and had never yet been naughty enough to be sent for to fairyland. Geoffrey was five and a half and Daisy was four. Daisy had pretty bright brown hair that hung in curls on her shoulders; but it is sad to think that she was always cross when she had to have it brushed, and when she had to have it washed she made a very great fuss indeed. One day she was even worse than usual, and she kicked and screamed so that at last her poor mother said: "Well, I cannot wash your hair while you behave like this. If you are so naughty I will not waste my time over you any longer—but how I wish we had never come to a country where there are no punishments."

Daisy did not mind at all, and was delighted at not being obliged to have her hair washed, and she ran out in the garden to her sand-heap to make sand-pies.

Her brother Geoffrey had been very naughty that morning too: he had refused to have his bath. I should not wonder if it was his bad example that helped to make Daisy so tiresome. He did not like having a bath, and he had splashed the water all over his mother, and had made a dreadful fuss, so at last he had been allowed to dress without washing. Now he was out in the garden too, making sand-pies.

Mother was very sad as she went about the house doing her work, and did not sing, as she usually did. The children missed the sound of her singing, and they knew

that she was sad because of their naughtiness. All the same, it was nice to be out playing instead of being punished.

Mother was sad all day, and as the evening came Geoffrey and Daisy thought they would be good, and let her wash them and brush their hair nicely at bed-time.

Alas! when bed-time came their dear mother put them to bed without doing either—and *she did not kiss them.*

That night the beautiful birds came and took away the children. They flew a long way, right over the housetops, and then they alighted on the ground at the entrance of fairyland.

“Go right in,” said the birds before they hopped away.

The children opened a little gate made of spiders’ webs, and went inside. On each side of the path was a row of tall hollyhocks, standing up straight and still like a line of soldiers. As the gate closed behind the children a bell began to ring, and then another and another, and so on until there was quite a peal.

“What is that for?” asked Geoffrey, looking very pleased; and the hollyhocks, holding their heads very high in the air, answered stiffly: “That is to let the fairy Queen know you are here. Go straight on.”

“What haughty flowers!” said Geoffrey.

The two children walked on till they came to a beautiful garden. They had never seen so many lovely flowers before. They walked all about the garden, wondering wherever the fairy Queen could be, when, all of a sudden, they met a procession of six fairy boys

and six fairy girls coming to meet them. These fairies were dressed in clothes so much like flowers that it was difficult at first to be sure they were not flowers themselves.

"Come this way, please," they said, but they did not come near enough to touch the children.

"Oh! won't you come and play with us," cried Daisy, "you are such dear little fairies?"

The fairies shook their heads. "No; we cannot play with you," they said. Then they led the children to where the Queen was seated on a little green throne. She looked so much like a beautiful rose that at first the children did not know who she was.

"Who are these children?" asked the Queen in a silvery voice.

The fairy boys and girls answered: "They are called Geoffrey and Daisy."

"Tell them to stand before me," said the Queen.

So Geoffrey and Daisy had to come and stand before the Queen, and the Queen and all the little fairies looked at them. The boy fairies stood on one side of the Queen and the girls fairies on the other.

"I am told you have been disobedient," said the Queen—"and I can see you are dirty."

"I don't care," said Geoffrey; and the next moment he was sorry he had said it, because the beautiful little fairy Queen began to look sad—just as mother had looked all day.

"I think you *do* care," she said gently. "Fairies," she asked, turning to her boys and girls, "why did these children's mother put them to bed without kissing them?"

"Because they were dirty," answered the boys and girls.

"And why did you not play with Daisy when she asked you to, my fairies?"

"Because her hair is not washed and brushed, and children who are not clean cannot play games properly."

"Yes, they can," said Daisy.

"Try," said the Queen to Daisy—"try and see. Here is a ball."

Daisy played with the ball, throwing it along and running after it, but very soon she felt so tired she had to leave off playing;

"Tell her why she is tired," said the fairy Queen in her soft voice.

The fairies said: "You know that when you get very hot, drops of water come out of little holes all over your body."

Daisy looked at her hands. "They don't on mine," she said.

"That is because you are dirty. The little holes on your hands are shut quite up and so, when you run about and play, the little drops of water in your body want to get out, and can't. They have to stay inside, and that makes you feel heavy and tired."

"Geoffrey said: 'Mother told me that once.'"

"What a pity you did not remember," said the Queen, "for you are even dirtier than your sister."

Geoffrey thought the Queen was right, for he had just noticed for the first time how dirty he was. His hands were black and grimy, and his clothes were covered with sand. Mother generally brushed his clothes for him when he had gone to bed, but to-night she had not done so.

“Do you like this garden, Geoffrey?” asked the fairy.

“Yes, your Majesty,” said Geoffrey.

“Do you think it smells fresh and sweet, and do you think the flowers have bright and pretty colours?”

“Yes, I do,” Geoffrey answered.

“Do you know,” the Queen continued, “why they are fresh and sweet? It is because every morning they are washed with dew, and because, when the rain comes, they do not run away and hide, but hold up their little faces to the rain to be made clean and fresh.”

“Is it?” said Geoffrey.

“I want you,” said the Queen, “to touch that beautiful lily that is standing near you.”

Geoffrey looked at the pure white lily, and looked at his own dirty hands.

“Oh! please, don’t make me,” he cried; “I shall spoil it with my dirty hands.”

“Then you must dance with this fairy; take her hands, and dance till I tell you to stop.”

A pretty little girl fairy, who looked like a sweet blue harebell, came forward; but Geoffrey fell on his knees before the Queen, and begged her not to make him soil anyone so beautiful with his dirty hands. He thought if his muddy shoes were to touch her dainty green slippers in the dance they would be sure to spoil them; and if his dirty coat touched her soft blue frock that would be spoiled too; but what made him feel worse even than that was to know that this dear little fairy, who was so clean and so beautiful, whose eyes were so kind and gentle, was looking at him—a dirty boy.

“Oh! I wish I were clean,” he said. Then he saw that everyone was looking at him; and every pair of fairy eyes changed into looking-glasses, and in every looking-glass he saw himself. His hair was not brushed, the corners of his eyes were anything but clean, and that made him look sleepy and stupid. His face was streaked with black, his mouth was covered with jam, his clothes were dusty and untidy; as for his hands—well, I never saw such hands, and I hope never to see any more like them. You can imagine, Geoffrey was not at all pleased to see himself like that in all the fairies’ eyes. He hid his face in his coat sleeve, he was so ashamed.

Then the fairy Queen said: “Come here, little Geoffrey.” So he put down his arms, and came and stood before the Queen. He was glad to find that he could not see himself in the fairies’ eyes any longer.

“I see you are cured of your wish to be dirty,” said the Queen very kindly, “but before you go you must listen to what I have to say. When boys and girls do not like being clean they get into the bad habit of not washing themselves enough. Then they get very tired, and that makes them careless and thoughtless. They don’t take the trouble to please mother and make her happy. Do you like to see mother unhappy?”

“No,” said Geoffrey.

“Very well. Never be cross when it is bath-time, but have a thorough good wash every day. Then you will be as sweet and fresh as all my flowers; you will be happy and you will be well;—and something else will happen.”

“What is that?” asked Geoffrey.

"Think," said the fairy Queen.

Suddenly Geoffrey smiled.

"Mother won't put us to bed without kissing us."

"Yes," said the fairy; "that is it. We do not wake up so happy in the morning when mother hasn't said good-night to us."

Daisy sighed when she heard that, for she knew it was true. She was sitting on the ground, holding her head with both hands.

"What is the matter?" asked the Queen.

"I've got such a headache."

"Tell her, fairies, why she has a headache."

"Because she has not had her hair washed and brushed; the tangles have not been combed out."

Daisy said she was very unhappy, and she wanted someone to have a game of hide-and-seek with her in the garden.

"Who will play with Daisy?" asked the Queen; but none of the fairies would play with her. They said her headache was making her cross and peevish, and there was no fun in playing with peevish children.

The Queen looked sad—just as mother had done.

"Come, my little girl," she said, "I will see if I can help you." She sent a fairy to fetch her own brush and comb and her own mirror. They were a present to her from the fairy King, and they were all made of mother-of-pearl. When the fairy brought them the Queen gave Daisy the mirror. Daisy looked at herself, and then she began to cry. Her hair was all matted together, and, instead of looking bright like the sunshine, it was dull and dark and all greasy, and oh! it was in a terrible tangle.

"Dry your tears," said the fairy; "I will brush and comb it for you myself."

"Oh no! no!" cried Daisy; "you will spoil your beautiful brush and you will break your comb. Besides that, you will make your beautiful white hands all nasty with my dirty hair. Oh, please, don't brush my hair!"

So the Queen sent away her brush and her comb and her mirror, and she said: "Summon the birds."

Then the bells began to ring, and the fairies told the children they must say good-bye to the Queen.

Geoffrey and Daisy, dirty though they were, kissed the Queen's hand, and, fortunately, they did not stain it when they touched it. I think that must have been because they were good again.

The fairies took them through the garden, and the hollyhocks bowed to them as they passed through the gate.

"Dear hollyhocks!" said Daisy.

Outside the gate the two birds were waiting, and they carried the children home, and put them back to bed, just in time to wake up in the morning.

Can you guess what happened when their mother came and said: "Time to get up, children!"

They made haste to scrub themselves clean, and they carefully brushed their hair, and they came down to breakfast looking so fresh and neat that father could hardly believe it. The last time he saw them they were both dirty and they were both cross.

The children laughed with delight to think how they had surprised him. Perhaps they were most pleased because mother was looking happy again and was smiling at her nice clean children. While Geoffrey and

Daisy were at play they heard her singing at her work. She was singing because she was happy, and she was happy because she knew that her children had learned how much nicer it is to feel clean than dirty, and because she knew that all the time they were clean they would be healthy and happy.

"Come, Daisy," she said, "let me wash your hair, and see if I can make it look bright like the sunshine again."

Daisy, remembering that Geoffrey had been quite good about his bath, went and had her hair washed, and tried hard to stand still, even though she did not like it—and she never once squealed.



III

THE BIG HOME AND THE LITTLE HOME

THERE was once a poor child named Effie. She had a lot of brothers and sisters; they were all older than she, and they were all poor like herself, and sometimes hungry, and the only toy they had to play with was an old wooden box on wheels.

This little child was about six years old. Her home was a very small house in a very dirty street, and she longed to live in a big house, such as she had seen in larger and cleaner streets, and she longed to have a garden.

One day Effie was going for a walk all by herself, when she came to two big iron gates. She peeped through the bars, and there she saw a large garden. There was a lovely lawn of sweet green grass, and there were trees, and more flowers than Effie had ever seen before.

As she stood at the gate wishing and wishing that she had such a garden, she was startled by a voice. She looked up and saw a gentleman dressed very smartly, just as you see them when they drive in grand carriages.

“Well, little girl,” he said, “would you like to come inside?”

“Oh!” said Effie, “oh!—yes, please, if I may.”

"I will take you to see my little girl," said the gentleman. So he took her in through the garden to a beautiful house. It was all so clean and so spotless that Effie wished she had washed her hands and face a little better before she came.

The gentleman took her into a large room. It seemed to Effie that that one room was larger than the whole of the little house where she herself lived. It had lovely furniture in it, and pretty curtains at the windows, and—and—something more lovely than all this—there was a cupboard full of toys.

There was also in this room a little girl about Effie's own age. She too was beautiful, and her clothes were made of silk, and were so white and soft that Effie did not like to go near her, but the gentleman said: "You may go and play with her if you like for a little while"; and then he left them alone.

At first Effie was shy, till the little girl said: "My name is Ivy, what is yours?" and when Effie told her, she said: "Would you like to play with my toys?"

Ivy took all her toys out of the cupboard for Effie to play with. There were dolls, and beds with real sheets and blankets, and dolls' clothes as lovely as Ivy's own; and there were horses and carts and bricks and tea-things, and a doll's bath with a real sponge and real soap; and there was a sweet little pink sunshade, which I think Effie liked best of all.

"How nice it must be," Effie said, "to have all these always for your very own. I haven't got any toys—only brothers and sisters."

Ivy did not say anything, but Effie thought she looked unhappy.

"Don't you like your toys?" she asked.

"Not much," said Ivy; "I am tired of them."

"Oh dear!" said Effie, "I should never be tired of such lovely things."

"I would rather have brothers and sisters," Ivy answered.

"You wouldn't," said Effie; "they tease."

Ivy looked surprised.

"I would rather have brothers and sisters than anything, though."

"I suppose you were never teased," said Effie. "I think I should like best to be like you, and have all those lovely flowers in the garden, and all these toys, and never be hungry."

"You don't know what it is like—being lonely," said Ivy. "Toys are not so much good when there is no one to play with, when you just have to think of games for yourself all the time. I would like to be you, and have brothers and sisters, better than anything."

At that minute a fairy appeared. They did not know a bit where she came from.

"Would you like to change places?" asked the fairy.

The children thought they would; so the fairy waved her wand, and Ivy was made into Effie, and Effie was made into Ivy. Effie stayed in the beautiful house, and Ivy went to the little house in the dirty street, and played with the brothers and sisters.

When bed-time came Ivy missed her snow-white bed and her warm bath, and her nurse to help her undress, and her own mother to come and kiss her. Besides that, there was no glass of milk and biscuit for her supper, and she had not had much tea.

“Oh, fairy!” she said, “I like the brothers and sisters—it is lovely to play with children—but I



want my bath and my nurse and my mother! Oh! please come and change me back!”

Effie had played all day in the big nursery with the toys, and enjoyed herself very much. She liked to feel so nice and clean, and to run in the garden, and she liked the nice food the nurse gave her, and she was very happy. When bed-time came, and she was put to bed in Ivy's big room all alone, she began to miss her brothers and sisters.

"Oh! if only they were here!" she said. Then she thought how dreadful it would be not to see them again; and she remembered that the teasing was not so bad after all, and that the brothers and sisters were really very kind to her, and often took her rides in the wooden box. She thought it would be so sad not to see them any more, and not to see her own mother and her own father.

"Oh, fairy!" she said, "please come and change me back."

She had hardly spoken before she was changed back into her own self, and was going to bed with her own brothers and sisters; and, in spite of everything, she was *very* glad to be back in that little home, though it was in a rather dirty street.

Ivy was her own self again too; and happy enough she was, for though it was sometimes lonely it was her own home, where her own dear mother and father and nurse lived.

Nothing, you see, mattered so much to those children when bed-time came, as "home." Somebody else's father and mother and home, however nice they may be, can never be the same as our own. Effie and Ivy were both very thankful to the fairy for turning them back into themselves again.



IV

DICK AND TIMOTHY GO ON A JOURNEY

ONCE upon a time there were two boys who were great friends. They went to the same school, they learned the same lessons, and played the same games. They lived in a country where there were large forests of beautiful trees. One boy was named Dick and the other Timothy.

It so happened that Dick was the son of a rich man. He always wore beautiful clothes, and had more pocket-money than most boys have. Timothy, however, was the son of a poor, hard-working labourer. His clothes were shabby, and he never had any pocket-money at all. This did not make any difference to the two boys—they were just as great friends as if they had both been rich or both been poor.

One day in the holidays Dick and Timothy made up their minds to go on a journey. They took a little bundle of clothes and a lantern, and a little bundle of food, and they started off one sunny morning to explore the forest.

Dick took all his pocket-money, but Timothy had none to take. Dick said he would pay the expenses.

They walked all day in the forest, enjoying the songs of the birds. Sometimes they ran along the moss-covered paths, sometimes they rested in the shade of the trees, and all the time they thought what a beautiful place the forest was.

When night fell, fortunately for the boys, they came to a forester's hut. It was a poor-looking place, built of wood; but Dick felt sure the people would take them in, and give them a night's lodging. They walked up to the door, and knocked. Soon an old woman came shuffling to the door, and opened it. She was surprised to see two little boys.

"Why, chillens, what be you doing here at this time o' night?" she cried.

Dick politely took off his cap, and bowed.

"If you please, lady, will you give us a night's shelter. I have money; I can pay you." And he showed the old woman some of the money in his pocket.

"Bless your dear little face," said the old woman, "we are not wanting your bit o' money. Come in, the two of you."

So Dick thanked her, and the boys went in. She set them down to the table, and gave them some nice soup.

Timothy grabbed everything he had offered to him, for he was very hungry, but he never even thought of

saying "Thank you!" This made the old woman rather angry.

"You are no gentleman, I can see," she said—"not like this fine little fellow here."

She meant Dick, and certainly, I must say, Dick was much more polite than Timothy.

When the forester, who was the husband of the old woman, came in from the back kitchen, where he had been washing his hands before having his supper, Dick stood up to greet him.

"Good-evening, forester," he said. "I hope you will not mind our putting up here for the night. We are taking a journey through the forest, we two boys. This is my friend Timothy."

"Very pleased to see you both, I'm sure," said the forester. And Dick said: "It is very kind of you"; but Timothy did not take any notice—he went on eating.

After they had finished their supper the old woman gave them a bed to sleep in, and when the morning came she made them a basin of bread and milk each for breakfast. As soon as they were ready they started again on their journey, first saying good-bye, and thanking the forester and his wife for their kindness.

The old woman put her hand on Dick's head, and said: "Bless you, sonnie, it does old eyes good to see such as you. As for that little friend of yours, teach him better manners before he comes here again."

It made Timothy unhappy to think that neither the forester nor his wife liked him. They were only kind to him for his friend's sake. Timothy could not help wondering why it was. Soon, however, he forgot all about it, for at every step they took the children saw

that the forest was getting more and more beautiful. There were sweet flowers everywhere, and mossy banks, and a winding stream of clearest water that seemed to be singing a little song.

Once Timothy stopped.

"Look up, Dick," he said.

They were standing under a big tree. Dick looked up as Timothy told him, and right up above the tree-tops he saw something very, very lovely. They both stood and looked at it through the branches, and it made their eyes sparkle with delight.

"What is it?" asked Dick.

"The sky," said Timothy in a soft voice. "Isn't it blue?"

I wonder how many of you children have ever stood under a tree and looked up through the green leaves at the sky? Try it next time you go to the park, then you will understand why Timothy and Dick thought it so lovely.

Well, these two boys continued their journey through the forest. Sometimes they were quite alone, but at other times they met people going out to work, or going to the town to buy food.

All the people they met liked Dick, and blessed him and smiled at him; a few gave him cakes or flowers; but somehow no one took any notice of Timothy.

This made poor Timothy very sad. He could not understand it. He thought and thought about it, till he made up his mind why it was.

"Dick," he thought to himself, "is rich, and has fine clothes and money; I am poor—that is the reason." The more he thought about it the more miserable he

grew. It was not his fault that he was poor—why should people despise him ?

Dick did not know how unhappy Timothy was, or he would have tried to comfort him, for he was his friend, and loved him dearly.

When it grew dark, and night came once more, there was no hut to be seen anywhere in that part of the forest, so the boys lighted their lantern, and searched about till they found a cave. Into this cave they crept, and lay down to sleep, safe and warm, till morning.

As soon as they were settled Dick's eyes closed, and he was fast asleep, but Timothy lay awake a long time, thinking. He thought it very hard that everyone should be so pleased to see Dick, while no one was ever pleased to see him. Presently the tears came into his eyes, and began to roll down his cheeks. He was really a brave boy, and he tried hard not to cry.

All of a sudden something touched him gently on the shoulder. He turned round quickly, for he was startled, and he saw a dear brown bear looking at him so kindly that he did not feel at all frightened.

"What is the matter ?" asked the bear, sitting down, with rather a bump, on the ground beside him.

"I am a poor boy, you see," explained Timothy, "and my friend Dick is a rich boy, so that whenever we meet people they are kind to Dick, but they do not take any notice of me."

"And do you think that is just because he is rich and you are poor ?" asked the bear.

"Of course it is," said Timothy.

"I am not quite so sure. I think there is another reason," said the bear, taking his pocket-handkerchief

and wiping the tears away from Timothy's eyes. "But I'll tell you what we will do: you go to sleep now, and in the morning you and Dick shall change clothes—you shall be the rich boy and he shall be the poor boy."

"That will be lovely!" cried Timothy; "but do you think Dick will like that?"

"I daresay he will not mind," said the bear; and he made a comfortable place for Timothy to lie down, and he sat beside him, and sang him to sleep with a song all about the blue sky, and about the birds and animals that lived in the forest.

In the morning the boys changed clothes, and continued their journey. The bear went home to his breakfast.

Timothy had never worn such fine clothes before, and he was mightily pleased with himself. He danced along, and sang aloud, thinking all the time how glad people would be to see him now. Once or twice he glanced at Dick to see how he looked in shabby clothes. Do you know, he was surprised to find that Dick looked almost as nice in them as he did in his own. That puzzled Timothy.

As they walked through the forest, they came upon some wood-cutters chopping wood, and piling it up, ready to be carried away and made into chairs and tables and doors and boxes in some carpenter's shop.

Timothy rushed up to the men in great glee, and stood staring at them, expecting every minute to see them look up and speak to him, and to offer him something nice, and smile at him—because *now, you remember, he was the rich boy*. He stood and stared at them, but they did not even know he was there. At last he stamped his foot impatiently.

"I am a rich boy," he said; "see what a lovely suit of clothes I am wearing."

The men just glanced up at him, and then went on with their work.

"Why don't you talk to me?" he cried angrily; but they did not say why—they just went on working.

At that moment up came Dick. *He was the poor boy now, you remember.*

"Good-morning, wood-cutters!" he called out in a cheery voice.

The men looked up at once, and answered: "Good-morning, young sir. How do you do, this fine morning?"

"Quite well, thank you," said Dick, "We are travelling through the forest. This is my friend Timothy. May we rest here and see you work a little while?"

"Oh yes," the men said; and they soon began to tell Dick about the timber they were getting ready, how it would have to be dragged to the edge of the forest by horses, then piled on waggons, and taken right away to another part of the country. Dick was very delighted to hear all about it, and he showed the men some butterflies he had caught for his collection.

By-and-by, when it was time to go, he shook hands with the wood-cutters, and said good-bye.

"That is a proper young gentleman for all his shabby clothes," said the men to each other.

All this time Timothy, who had crept away behind a mossy bank, listened, very sad at heart. When he heard what the men said he got up, and walked slowly after Dick, wondering and wondering why Dick was

always called a little gentleman wherever he went. Presently, however, he looked down at the fine clothes he was wearing, and jingled the money in his pockets, and that cheered him up a little. He ran after Dick, and put his hand on Dick's shoulder; and they walked on together, singing a song, and feeling as free and happy as the birds singing in the trees.

After a time they met a girl carrying a heavy pail of water from the stream.

"Can I help you?" cried Dick.

"Thank you, little gentleman," said the girl; "if you would just lend a hand I should be glad."

So they walked along together, the girl holding one side of the pail and Dick the other. Dick told her how much he and his friend liked being in the forest. The girl told him that she lived in the forest, and she liked it too. Timothy walked behind them, kicking up the mossy path as he went.

"What is the use of having fine clothes?" he asked himself. "Nobody ever calls *me* a little gentleman."

When they got to the cottage in the forest where the girl lived she gave Dick a flower for his button-hole.

"That is my way of thanking you for your help," she said.

"I was very pleased to help you," answered Dick, taking off his cap; and then the two boys went on together through the forest. Wherever they went the same thing happened. People always liked Dick, but no one took much notice of Timothy, or even looked at his fine clothes. What could be the reason? Timothy did not understand it at all.

That night they slept in a wood-cutter's shed, and

when Dick had fallen asleep Timothy lay awake and looked at the stars. They were very bright stars, and they twinkled down at him so kindly, but, in spite of that, he was unhappy. He could not guess why it was that the fine clothes had made no difference at all. The next minute he heard a heavy tread, and there was the brown bear come to see how he had got on.

Timothy sat up, and began to pour out all his troubles, and the bear listened patiently.

"I told you it was not just because he was rich that people liked him," said the bear.

"Why is it, then?" asked Timothy.

"It is because," said the bear, "he has nice manners—that means that when he sees people he gives them a kind greeting; when he wants help he asks for it politely; and when he sees anybody who wants help he gives it to them gladly. Thinking of others before yourself is the beginning of good manners."

Timothy was surprised.

"Nobody ever told me that before," he said.

"No," said the bear kindly; "I know. That is why I came to help you. Now you see it was not rich clothes and pocket-money that made him a gentleman."

"No; it couldn't have been the clothes," said Timothy thoughtfully. "He was just as nice, and people liked him just as much, in my shabby clothes."

"Now," said the bear, "take my advice: change back to your own clothes, keep them as tidy as you can, but never mind if they *are* shabby. Be kind and bright and cheerful like those stars up there, and before very long you will be as much a gentleman as if you were a prince in a beautiful palace."

“ This forest is better than a palace,” said Timothy. “ I shall be a prince of the forest, and take care of all the people and the birds and animals that live in it—and Dick shall come and stay with me whenever he likes, because, you know, I am very fond of Dick.”

The bear patted him on the shoulder, and said : “ That is right. I will be your chief lord-in-waiting. To-morrow we will call a council of all the animals, and tell them you are their prince. Shall we ? ”

Timothy was delighted. He meant to begin the very next day and practise good manners, so that all the animals could look up to him, and respect him ; but, without knowing it, he began to have good manners then and there, for he said : “ Good-night, chief-councillor bear. Sleep sound, and thank you for being my friend.”

The next moment he was fast asleep, and the bear sat outside the hut and kept watch over the children all night.

The MESSENGER of Santa Claus

A black and white illustration of a messenger running towards the right. He is wearing a wide-brimmed hat, a long coat, and breeches. He is holding a long staff or stick in his right hand. The style is a simple line drawing with some cross-hatching for shading.

V

IT was Christmas Eve. You know what happens on Christmas Eve, don't you? You know that boys and girls hang up their stockings to see if Santa Claus will bring them presents. He generally does—sometimes more than one each. Mothers and fathers and Santa Claus always like Christmas-time to be happy for the children. Do you know why? They like the children to be happy in memory of a little baby who was born long, long ago in Bethlehem—a little baby who was called Jesus. When he grew up to be a man he was very fond of little children, and used to take them on his knee, and talk to them. I daresay he told them stories sometimes; and so, remembering his love for children, mothers and fathers try to make his birthday happy for their own little ones.

The Christmas Eve I am going to tell you about was a real wintry one: there was snow on the ground, and the air was cold, and the stars were shining very clear and bright. In all the nurseries in all the houses the children were being put to bed; and in the houses where there were no nurseries the children were going to bed in their bedrooms or their attics. All of them, the richest and the poorest, were hanging up their stockings.

This story is about a nursery where there were five children—the eldest and the youngest were girls, and the other three were boys. They hung up their stockings, laughing and chattering, and wondering what Santa Claus would bring them in the night when they were asleep.

After they were tucked up and mother had kissed them good-night they snuggled down in bed, and closed their eyes. I rather fancy they hoped Santa Claus would think they were asleep, and would come and fill their stockings—and then they could take just a peep at him out of the corners of their eyes. They wanted so much to see what he was like. However, he did not come, and he did not come, and the children were getting rather tired of watching for him, when suddenly there was a little tap-tapping sound, as if some small person were walking along the floor.

All five children sat up in bed, and looked. I don't believe you will ever guess what they saw. No; it was not Santa Claus. It was ever such a little man, dressed in a red suit, and red stockings and shoes and red gloves, and a red hat with a white feather in it.

"Whoever are you?" asked the eldest of the boys, whose name was Willie.

The tiny man took off his hat, and made a sweeping bow, first to the girls and then to the boys.

"I," he said, "am the messenger of Santa Claus."

"Oh, how nice!" cried Gladys, the elder girl, clasping her hands. "Is Santa Claus coming?"

"Perhaps," said the little man. Then, with a big spring, he jumped on to the end of Gladys's bed.

"Santa Claus sends me first to find out what sort of children you are."

"Oh dear!" exclaimed the children, "have we been naughty?"

"Santa Claus wants to know," the little man said, "if you know what kindness is."

"Why, of course we do," cried the children.

"Let me see," said the messenger of Santa Claus. "You, Gladys, tell me what kindness is."

Gladys thought a little while.

"Santa Claus gives us presents—that is kindness."

"Y-e-s," said the messenger. "That is not a bad answer. But how is it that Santa Claus is not kind to everybody? You know there are some children he doesn't give any presents to."

"Why doesn't he?" asked little Marjorie.

"I am not quite sure," said the messenger; "it is the very, very poor children that Santa Claus doesn't give presents to. I know one little girl who has hung up her stocking, but Santa Claus is not going to put anything in it."

"Why not?" asked one of the boys.

"Well, I don't quite know; perhaps some children want so many toys that Santa Claus has none left for her."

The children could not quite understand that.

"Now, Willie," said the messenger of Santa Claus, "tell me an act of kindness."

Willie thought some time before he answered: "A poor, tired woman was carrying home the washing, and it was very heavy, and she was very tired. There came along a clergyman and his friend, walking and talking on their way home to dinner. In the middle of what he was talking about the clergyman said: 'That is too heavy for you, my good woman.'

“‘I can’t help that, sir,’ replied the woman; ‘the washing is wanted home to-night, and there is no one but me to take it.’

“The clergyman made her put it on the ground, and he and the gentleman carried it down the road for her. I think she was very glad about it.”

“Ah!” said the messenger, “that was a real act of kindness. Now, Arthur, what do you know about kindness?”

Arthur said: “There were some horrid girls once who tied a pussy’s feet up to a fence so it could not get away; and there came along a grocer’s boy—I am going to be a grocer’s boy when I’m big—and the boy said: ‘Poor pussy,’ and untied its legs, and stroked it, and made it all well again.”

“Yes,” said the messenger of Santa Claus; “that was an act of kindness. Now, Claude, we will hear what you have to say.”

“There was a dog,” said Claude, who was a very little boy, “and the dog had lost its way, and there came along a boy, and he said: ‘Poor dog, I will take you home.’ And he picked up the dog, and took him home, and the dog licked his hands all the time to show how pleased he was.”

“Yes,” said the messenger; “I see you all know something about kindness. We will not ask Marjorie, she is such a little girl; there is plenty of time for her to learn about kindness. Now go to sleep, all of you, and I will go and report to Santa Claus.”

Down in bed popped all their heads, and the messenger put on his hat, and jumped down on the floor.

Then Marjorie, unknown to the others, crept softly out of bed, and took hold of the messenger’s hand.

"Please," she whispered, "if Santa Claus is going to give me a present, will you ask him to take it instead to the little girl who hung up her stocking and is not



going to have a present? I've got some old toys I can play with."

So the messenger kissed Marjorie's hand, and took off his hat with a sweeping bow.

"Very well, little Marjorie," he said, "I will do as you wish." And he vanished.

Not long afterwards he arrived at the house of the

poor little girl for whom Santa Claus had no present. She was asleep in her bare attic, so he woke her up, and told her about Marjorie.

"Oh, kind little girl!" she cried. "Oh! what can I do to thank her?"

"Write it," said the messenger of Santa Claus.

So the child got up, found a piece of paper and a pencil, and wrote as well as she could: "Thank you, dear unknown friend."

"What is your name?" asked the messenger.

"Nancy."

"Then write that too."

So she wrote: "From Nancy." And the messenger took the piece of paper, and gave it to Santa Claus.

The next morning when Nancy felt in her stocking there was a beautiful box of tea-things—white china tea-things with gold rims and little pink flowers on them. There were twelve cups and saucers, twelve plates, twelve spoons, a tea-pot, a sugar basin, and a milk jug.

Nancy was so happy that she clapped her hands with joy, so happy that she took up the tea-pot and gave it a great big hug, and said: "Oh, how I *love* the little girl who sent me this!"

When the children in the nursery woke up on Christmas morning they each had a beautiful toy, except Marjorie.

Gladys had a baby doll in long clothes that opened and shut its eyes. Willie had a big box with carpenter's tools in it. Arthur had a grocer's shop, with a man and a boy to serve in it, and there were drawers in the shop to keep rice and sugar in. Claude had a stable, with

horses and carriages, a groom and a dog. Marjorie only had a little piece of paper, on which was written :
“ Thank you, dear unknown friend.—From Nancy.”

The other children did not think that was much of a present from Santa Claus ; but Marjorie liked it, and when mother came in to see the toys she just put her arms very lovingly round Marjorie, and kissed her tenderly.

“ I think it is the best present of all,” she said.



VI

THE GARDEN OF FORGET-ME-NOTS

FIRST of all, I want to know how many of you children have gardens. Well, you have all seen gardens, haven't you, even if you have none of your own? And you know that all sorts of different flowers grow in gardens.

The one I am going to tell you about was not like other gardens, for it only had one kind of flower in it, and this one kind of flower grew in all the flower-beds. It was a very pretty little blue flower, just as blue as the sky on a spring day. It was called "Forget-me-not."

The garden belonged to a beautiful lady, who had long golden hair, and eyes as blue as her flowers. Everybody who knew her called her "Myosotis."

Perhaps you will be surprised when I tell you that she kept this Garden of Forget-me-nots because she loved little children.

"Send the children to me," she would say, "when they forget to do what they are told, and I will help them."

Now, there were once two children—one a little girl called Ella, the other, her cousin, a little boy called Willie. They lived with their grandmother in London. These two children went to a big school, where they had

to learn a great many lessons. They liked going to school, but, I am sorry to say, they were very forgetful. If their teacher said: "Sit up straight, children," they would sit up straight at once; but the next minute they had forgotten, and were sitting badly again, and the teacher had to say once more: "Sit up, children." This happened quite often; but there was something that Ella and Willie forgot even more often than that: the teacher could not think of any way to help them remember it.

It was something that every boy and every girl must try hard to remember. If you listen carefully to the rest of this story you will find out what it was.

The teacher tried all kinds of ways to make Ella and Willie remember, but it was no use. At last she asked Myosotis to help her.

"Oh yes," said Myosotis, "I will help you. How old are the children?"

"Ella is seven, and Willie is five," said the teacher. "I am sure they *try* to remember what I tell them, and they try to please me."

"Yes," said Myosotis. "Well, if you will send them to me I will see what I can do."

The teacher thanked her, and went back to tell the children.

Ella and Willie wondered what it would be like in the Garden of Forget-me-nots. They did not know any other children who had been there, and what happened inside nobody knew except those who had been.

Well, Myosotis met the two children at the gate, and took them by the hand, and led them into her lovely garden. She walked about with them, and talked to

them. They told her about the games they played and the lessons they learned.

"We draw flowers at school," said Willie.

"What flowers do you draw?" asked Myosotis.

"Daffodils," said Ella.

"And tulips," said Willie.

"Do you draw forget-me-nots?" asked Myosotis.

"No," answered the children.

"Would you like to take some forget-me-nots to school with you, and ask teacher to let you draw them?"

"Yes," said Willie.

"And you too, Ella?" asked Myosotis.

"Yes," said Ella.

Myosotis picked one of her pretty blue forget-me-nots, and gave it to Ella. The little girl held it in her hand, and thought how lovely it was.

"Nobody ever had forget-me-nots like mine," said Myosotis as she gave one to Willie.

"No," said Willie; "they are so pretty."

"Oh! mine is fading," said Ella sadly; and, sure enough, so it was.

"Oh! mine is fading too. What a pity!" cried Willie.

Myosotis picked some more, and gave them to the children until they each had a big bunch, but, strange to say, they all faded as soon as the children took them. Now, I wonder why that was!

Ella and Willie were very sorry. It was no good taking dead flowers to school.

"Teacher will not let us draw dead flowers," said Willie.

"No; of course not," said Myosotis. "Let us go to



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"Oh! mine is fading!"

another part of the garden, and see if we can pick some that will not fade."

They walked along the garden path, and presently *Myosotis* stopped.

"We will throw the dead ones on the rubbish heap to be burnt," she said, "if you will give them to me, please."

The children gave her the dead flowers, and she threw them away.

They went on a little farther, and then *Myosotis* stooped down, and picked another flower.

"Here is a beauty! Would you like this, Ella?" she said.

"Yes, please," said Ella, taking the flower. She looked at it anxiously to see if it would fade like the others.

"It doesn't fade!" she cried with delight. "Look, Willie, how lovely and fresh it keeps."

Then *Myosotis* gave Willie a flower, and as he took it he said: "Thank you." And he watched the flower to see if it would fade.

"No! no!" he said, almost shouting with joy; "it is quite fresh. Please, may I have this to take to teacher? I *know* she will like it."

"Yes," said *Myosotis*. "You may take it to your teacher, and you must tell her how it was that the first flowers we picked faded."

Willie and Ella both looked puzzled. They could not think *why* the first ones had faded.

Myosotis smiled.

"There are two little words that you always forget to say," she told them.

Willie looked up at her kind face, and thought how beautiful she was.

"I know," he said; "we forgot to say 'Thank you.'"

"And 'Please,'" added Ella.

"Yes," said Myosotis, "you both often forget to say: '*Please*, teacher, may I have a pencil?' when drawing-time comes, and I am afraid you always forget to say 'Thank you' when she gives you what you ask for."

The children wondered how Myosotis knew that.

"I told you that my flowers were not like anybody else's flowers, did I not?" said Myosotis, with a smile. "Well, my flowers live here to help little girls and boys to remember things."

"Do they?" said the children.

"Yes; if you had remembered to say 'Please' and 'Thank you' the flowers we picked just now would not have faded; but, you see, they were quite dead, and we had to throw them away."

"I wish we *had* remembered," Ella said sadly, "because teacher would have liked all those flowers."

"She will be quite happy when she sees the ones I have just given you," said Myosotis kindly. "I know she will, because directly she sees them she will know that you said those two little words you so often forget."

"Will she?" asked Willie.

"Yes," said Myosotis. "I never let anyone take away faded flowers from my garden: faded flowers say 'Forget me,' but fresh flowers say 'Forget me not.'"

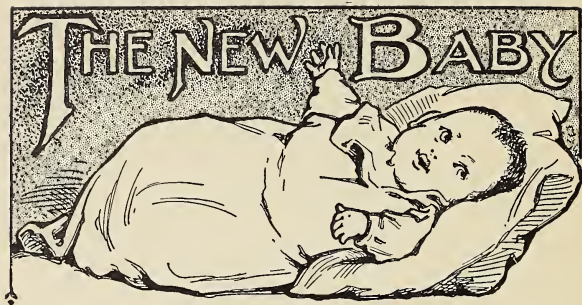
Ella and Willie liked to hear that, and they did not forget the two little words when Myosotis gave them each another flower.

"Please, may we keep these?" they asked.

"Yes; you may," said Myosotis. "I want you to keep them always, because all the time you keep them they will help you to remember those two little words 'Please' and 'Thank you.' Be very careful, for if you forget the flowers will begin to fade."

The children did not want that to happen, so when they said good-bye they thanked Myosotis for being so kind to them. Then they ran to school as fast as they could, to show their teacher how fresh the flowers were that they had brought from the Garden of Forget-me-nots.

"I always and always and always mean to remember to say 'Please' and 'Thank you,'" said Willie, "because I don't want these flowers ever to fade." And Ella made up her mind to do the same.



VII

“WHERE am I?”

Somebody was lifting baby out of his cradle. He could not talk, but that was what he thought.

“Where am I? It is a most funny place, this world I have got into. It is not quite how I want it, and it is not how it ought to be, I am sure. I don’t like being here much. What is the matter with everything?”

That was what he went on thinking about. He did not understand things at all, because he was such a tiny boy. It was very tiring thinking so much, so he just shut up his little eyes, and went to sleep. It was no good trying to find out about things.

When he woke up somebody was carrying him downstairs, but it only seemed to him that he was going quickly through the air. He began to think again.

“Whatever am I doing now? This can’t be right.”

He put out his little hand to try to find out where he was, and somebody kissed it. That was his sister;

but he did not know he had a sister, and he did not know it was a kiss. He could not make things out at all. Presently he stopped rushing through the air, and then he heard something very loud going on. He gave a little cry—he was frightened. Poor baby! He need not have been frightened, it was only somebody talking in a big voice; but to such a little baby a voice sounds like a great big rumble. It was really only his daddy talking, but he did not even know then what a daddy is.

Baby felt that things were somehow not right, but he could not think what was wrong. He opened his eyes wide, he stretched out his hands, and he gave another little cry. Then something happened, and—though he did not know what or why—all at once everything was quite happy and comfy. He felt that things had come right. He gave a contented sigh, and curled himself up, and put his wee head against something soft and strong and very, very loving, and he knew he need not bother to think any more.

Do you know where he was then? Why, in mother's arms, of course.



VIII

TWO FRIGHTENED LITTLE PEOPLE

BOB and Mary were two little children who lived with their father and mother in a farmhouse in the country. It was a very old house, but not a big one.

Bob and Mary always slept in a little room next to their mother's and father's. It was a funny room—such a room would not be built nowadays. The roof sloped down on each side nearly to the floor, so that it looked almost like a tent. The windows were in the sloping roof, and were very tiny. There were big beams across the room from one end to the other. Indeed, it was a queer-looking room altogether. You would have thought so if you had seen it; but, you see, these children had been accustomed to it ever since they were babies, and did not think it at all strange. Bob had one little wooden bed and Mary had another, and they used to tumble into bed every night after their baths, go off to sleep like sensible children, and not wake up till the morning.

Now, one summer-time their Cousin Tommy came to stay with them. He had never seen such a funny room before. He lived in a town, and his father had a nice shop, with a big house at the back of it. Tommy's room

had a proper ceiling, and Tommy never went to bed without a light, so he did not much like the idea of going to bed in that strange bedroom and being left in the dark.

Mary's mother had made a bed for her in another little room, so that Tommy could have her bed. The first night Mary felt very strange and lonely all by herself, because she was not used to sleeping alone. She covered her head up under the bed-clothes; but that was no good: she still felt lonely, and presently she began to feel frightened. Bob was asleep, for she could hear him snoring. Everything else sounded so quiet that she got more frightened, and she began to fancy that her mother and father had gone away, and left them all alone in the house; but, of course, they had not done that. She sat up, and listened; then she began to cry, very softly, so as not to wake Bob and Tommy. She sat up a long time, clasping her arms around her legs, and resting her chin on her knees, and crying, because she was afraid.

Presently she heard a rustle on the bed-clothes, and there was something looking at her with solemn eyes. It was some kind of bird. Can you guess? Well, I will tell you. It was an owl.

Now, Mary loved every kind of bird, but of them all she loved the owl best, and she looked at him, and smiled.

"Have you come because I am frightened?" she asked.

"Yes," said the owl. "I have come to tell you something that my mother told all of us children long ago; and her mother told it to her, and her mother told it to her, and her mother told it to her, and her mother told it to her, and her mother——" But Mary interrupted the owl by laughing softly.

"Never mind *who* told it, Owlle; tell me *what* they told."

The owl looked very wise, put his head on one side, and blinked hard. Then he said: "My mother told us never to be afraid of being left alone."

"That is all very well," said Mary; "but when you are not used to it, you know——"

"That makes no difference," said the owl decidedly.



"Oh, but it does!" said Mary.

"Why?" asked the owl quickly.

Mary considered a moment. Really, she did not see anything to be afraid of when she came to think about it. What was there to be afraid of in being alone? There was nobody and nothing to hurt her. There was only the dear old owl, and he was cheering her up, and making her feel quite chirpy.

"When I was a baby," said the owl, still looking very wise and solemn, "I used to be frightened too; but I used to tell myself stories about brave baby owls who were not frightened of anything at all. You know, it is really very silly to be frightened."

"Especially when there is nothing to frightened of," put in Mary.

"Exactly," said the owl.

"Tell me one of your stories," said Mary.

"I can't remember them," answered the owl; "but they were always about brave babies who said to themselves: 'I am going to be brave, and, even if I think there is something to be afraid of, I am not going to let it frighten *me*.' There is one story I think I can remember for you," said the owl, thoughtfully. He blinked his eyes, and looked at Mary, and found that she was fast asleep. So he spread his wings over her, and gently pushed her back on to the pillow, and covered her up. Then he went back to his barn at the back of the house.

In the morning Mary woke up to find the sunshine streaming into her room, and as she rubbed her eyes slowly so as to get more wide awake, she said: "There really is nothing to be afraid of, Owlie, is there, when you do wake up alone?"

From the barn at the back of the house she heard the owl answer: "Nothing at all."

"And even if you are frightened, just a little bit, Owlie—sometimes, you know, you can't help it just a little bit—even then you can be brave, and not cry, and you can wash and dress yourself quite the same as usual, and try not to mind being alone."

"Quite right," answered the owl sleepily; and Mary did not bother him any more, because she knew it was his bed-time. Owls always go to bed in the day-time, you know.

"I wonder," said Mary to herself, "if the owl really came last night, or if it was only a dream?"

She liked to pretend it was real; but even if it was a dream, it was a very nice one. Ever afterwards, when she felt frightened about things, she thought of the owl and his advice. Just as he had done about baby owls, she made up stories to amuse herself about baby girls who were not afraid of anything. Do you know, I really believe those stories helped her to grow up, as she afterwards did, into a brave woman.

Now, it so happened that, while Mary was crying because she was alone, her Cousin Tommy was—not quite, but almost—crying too. He did not like the strange room with the ceiling that looked like a tent; the light from the moon that came in at the window did not seem to him enough.

Bob was sound asleep the minute his head touched the pillow, but Tommy tossed from side to side, closing his eyes every now and then to try to sleep. He heard strange noises in the roof above his head that frightened him, so he lay very still, and listened. Whenever he opened his eyes he thought he saw a big boy standing at the foot of the bed and looking at him.

"Oh, if only I had a light," he said to himself, "or if only Bob would wake up and tell me who it is, and why people are talking in the roof, and what that strange thing is waving about outside the window."

He called to Bob in a trembling voice, but Bob was too sound asleep to hear him.

Poor Tommy! We feel inclined to laugh at him for being so frightened all about nothing, don't we? But we must only laugh kindly. He was a little boy of seven, and he had never been away from his mother and his home before.

He buried his head under the clothes, and tried to forget the strange room and the strange noises he heard.

All of a sudden, in the midst of his fear, he remembered something his Sunday-school teacher had said about courage.

"Look your fear straight in the face, lads, and it will turn into courage," he had said. "Always be brave enough to find out what it is that is making you afraid. Go up to it, and touch it if you can."

Tommy sat up in bed, and opened his eyes.

"I won't be a coward," he said, "because I like that teacher, and he always tells us what is true."

He jumped out of bed, and no sooner had he got to the boy (as he thought) standing at the foot of the bed, than he found it was not a boy at all, but the shadow of the bedpost on the wall. He went to the window, and the strange thing he had seen waving about outside the window was the branch of a dear old tree.

He listened to see if he could tell what the whispering voices were, and he found out that it was only the whispering voice of the wind blowing through the trees—and nothing more than that.

Tommy thought he had been silly to be afraid of nothing; but I think he was a brave and wise boy to

get up and find out, in spite of his fear, whether there were anything to be frightened of.

He jumped back into bed quite satisfied and happy, and soon was as fast asleep as Bob himself.

It often, indeed almost always, happens in that way. When we are afraid of things it is because we don't go up to them and look at them or touch them. Directly we make up our minds to be brave, and not cry, we find that it grows easy not to be afraid, and I think very often we find, as Tommy did, that there was nothing at all to be afraid of.



THE PANSY PATCH

IX

A LITTLE boy once lived in a beautiful home in the country. The garden was so big that you could not see nearly all of it at once; indeed, it was quite a long walk to go all round it and see everything that was in it. In one corner of the garden this boy had a little piece of ground that was his very own, and here he grew the flowers he loved best—pansies. He had all kinds, big ones, little ones, purple and yellow and mauve and blue and white—all looking like velvet. He had planted them himself, with the help of the gardener, and every day he went to see his pansy patch, and to have a little talk with his flowers.

This boy's name was Robbie, and I am sorry to tell you he had got into the very bad habit of not speaking the truth.

His mother tried to cure him of this bad habit, and his nurse and his governess tried too, but, though he remembered once or twice, he did not remember always.

Now, one morning Robbie went out into the garden to see his flowers, feeling not very happy. There were two things that made him feel like that: to begin with, he had been rude and disobedient to his governess; and then, because he was ashamed to let his mother

know of it, he had told her an untruth. When she asked him if he had been good, and done his lessons nicely, he said: "Yes, mother," when all the time he had done them badly.



Well, Robbie went out to his pansy patch to try to forget that he had been naughty, but when he came to it he found that all the pansies had turned their little faces away from him. He ran round the other side to see if they would look at him, but so soon as he got

there they all turned their backs on him—all those little flowers that he loved so dearly.

“You horrid little things!” he said, stamping his foot; but they took no notice. He bent down, and hit one, and it broke off, and fell on its face on the ground.

Then Robbie was sorry, and he picked up the broken flower, and kissed it; but it shut itself all up, and would not look at him.

Robbie felt cross, and unhappy too, and he was dreadfully sorry that the pansies would not look at him. Slowly and sadly he went back to the house. He crept upstairs to his nursery, and sat down on the floor. He was quite alone; but presently he thought he heard a little voice, and looking down at the broken pansy in his hand he found that it was speaking to him.

“Why did all the pansies turn their heads away?” he asked.

The broken flower answered: “Your garden is a magic garden, and the pansies are your thoughts. When you told mother what was not true they were sad, and turned away their heads.”

“Did they know I’d been naughty?”

“Yes.”

“And did they know I told mother a story?”

“Yes.”

Robbie sat still, thinking.

“I wish I had not been naughty,” he said at last.

“So do I,” said the broken flower; “if you had not been naughty, you see, you would not have been ashamed to tell mother the truth.”

“No,” said Robbie; “and then the pansies would not have turned away their faces.”

"No."

"I did not like mother to know I'd been naughty."

"But if it was true," said the pansy, "you ought to have told her when she asked."

"Yes," answered Robbie.

"The worst of doing one naughty thing," said the pansy, "is that it often makes us want to do something else that is wrong."

"I wish I hadn't," said Robbie.

"Well, you know what to do," said the pansy. And then the voice left off speaking.

Robbie got up slowly, and went to find his mother. He had made up his mind what to do. When we know we have been naughty it is not always easy to go and say we are sorry, is it? Robbie did not like doing that, even though he really was sorry.

At last he found his mother, and, thinking of the pansies with their heads turned away from him, he told her all about his naughtiness.

When mother had heard all she took his hand, and said: "Let us go to the pansy patch and see what has happened."

When they got to Robbie's garden they found all the faces of the pansies were looking up, and smiling, and watching for him, and then Robbie was very glad indeed.

"This is a magic garden, mother," he said, "and the pansies are my thoughts. The little broken flower told me so."

"Yes," answered his mother; "we each have a magic garden where we keep our thoughts."

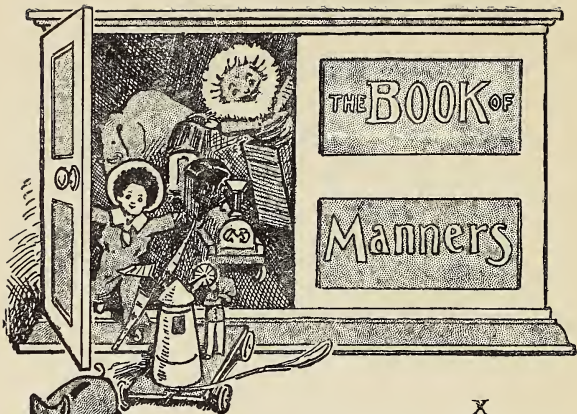
“Do thoughts always feel sad when we tell stories?”
Robbie asked.

“Yes.”

“I shall try not to tell stories any more,” said Robbie.
“I will always remember every time to say what is true.”

“That is a wise boy,” said mother; “and to-morrow you must tell your governess all about your pansy patch—I am sure she will like to know.”

Robbie promised that he would.



X



THERE was once a book that lived in a nursery at the top of a very big house in London. It was kept on a shelf in the nursery cupboard, and nobody ever looked at it. On the cover of the book was printed in letters of red and gold: "The

Book of Manners for Little Children." It had an

elastic band round it, and it lay on the top of a pile of other nursery books. The poor thing was covered with dust. It felt sadly neglected, and was always sighing, to think how useless it had become. Nobody ever read in its pages now, nobody ever looked at its pictures, nobody cared to keep it clean and dusted.

Now, there is generally a reason for everything, and the reason why the book was neglected was this, it belonged to some boys and girls who were growing up. When they were little children they were very fond of it, but now they were big they hardly ever came to the nursery at all. That was how it was that the poor little book had no children to talk to.

At first it fretted—just as we do when mother does not give us what we ask for. Then it made up its mind to find something to do.

“It is just because I am idle that I am unhappy,” it said to itself. “I’ll be a man now, and teach the toys: they shall look at my pictures.”

One night, after everyone in the house had gone to bed, the book stood up on the shelf, shook the dust from his cover, pushed open the cupboard door, and jumped out. He ran along the floor till he came to the hearthrug; then he beat a tattoo on the fire-guard. And what do you think happened? All the toys came running out of the cupboard—first a white rabbit with a carrot in its mouth, then a brown horse with a beautiful tail and black beady eyes. After him came a dainty dolly dressed in purple satin. She was a little stiff from having lain in the cupboard so long, but she managed to get along by holding on to the horse’s tail. Then came a pig; next a wind-mill, with

a little man on it in a blue coat carrying a sack ; then a sailor boy ; then a train—and oh ! I can't tell you how many more. They all ran at the top of their speed till they reached the mat, and crowded round the book.

The book looked round him, and smiled with pleasure. Have you ever seen a book smile with pleasure ? No. I never have either, but never mind. This book was smiling because he was going to be useful at last. He sat down solemnly, took off his elastic band, opened his covers, and turned over the pages.

“ You must call me ‘ sir,’ if you please,” he said.

“ Yes, sir,” answered all the toys in a chorus.

He turned to the first page.

“ Here,” he said, “ is the picture of a little boy. You see he is giving a chair to a lady who has just come to see his mother. What is that for ? ”

“ To sit on, I suppose,” said the toys.

“ Of course it is to sit on,” said the book a little impatiently ; “ but why does the boy give it to her ? She could have got it for herself. What I want to know is *why* the boy is getting it for her.”

The toys had not the least idea why. They looked at each other, and at the picture, and stupidly shook their heads.

The book began to feel cross with them, and was just going to speak angrily to them when he remembered that anger does not help anybody, so he calmed himself down before he spoke again.

“ Think a minute,” he said ; “ look at the picture, and think.”

They all looked at the picture, and presently the

horse said : " We are not boys, so how can we know why he is giving the lady a chair ? "

" You are really rather dull, all of you," said the book ; " you don't seem to have any imagination at all. Can't you guess ? "

" I think I can," said the white rabbit, dropping the carrot out of his mouth. " I used to live in a family where there were boys and girls."

" Well," said the book, " let us hear."

" I think, sir," said the rabbit, " it is because he knows that it is more polite to give a chair to your visitor than to let your visitor get a chair for herself."

" Quite right," said the book, growing cheerful again. " It is always good manners to look after other people."

The book turned over another page.

" Here is a picture of some children coming down in the morning to breakfast. What is the first thing they do ? "

He had to wait a long time for an answer. None of the toys had the least idea.

" You are the silliest toys I ever met," said the book, losing all patience. " They say ' Good-morning,' of course."

" How can you expect us to know ? We have never been children in our lives, sir ; we are only toys."

" But even toys might guess what children do when they come down to breakfast," he said. " *You*," he added, turning to the doll in the satin dress—" *you* ought to know if the others don't."

" I am sorry," said the doll, quite politely. " You see, it is so long since the children have played with me that I have forgotten."

“Well, you ought not to forget,” said the book. “You are all the stupidest, stupidest, *stupidest* toys I ever met with.” Then, I am grieved to say, he began beating them all with his elastic band.

The next minute he was sorry he had lost his temper, for one by one the toys slipped away, crept back across the floor, and went into the cupboard. Each got into its place, and, when the last one was in, the doors shut tight and the key turned in the lock. The book was left all alone on the nursery floor.

“Oh, toys, do forgive me!” he cried. “I was trying to teach you about good manners, and all the time I was showing bad manners myself by getting cross and impatient. Please come back.”

The toys did not come—at least not that night. The book turned over its pages sorrowfully all alone.

“I will try not to give way to my bad temper any more,” he said; “then, perhaps, the toys will come out again.”



XI

THE LOST SPADE

HAVE you ever seen the sea? Perhaps some of you live by the sea, and often go down to the sands with your pails and spades, and make sand-castles, or watch the big waves come rolling up the beach.

There were two boys who lived by the sea. They were friends, and often played together on the sands, making castles, or digging big holes, and filling them up with water. Sometimes they make sand-pies too.

One boy was called Jim and the other Davy, and they were both six years old.

Now, one day Jim and Davy were building a castle of sand, while the waves were rolling up the beach very quickly indeed, and they made haste to get their castle finished. While Jim was making the top of the castle Davy was building up a wall with stones and pebbles, so that the waves should not come round the castle too quickly.

Davy ran up the beach to fetch some very large stones he saw there, and whilst he was gone Jim went on

busily building up the castle with sand. Without thinking about the sea he threw aside his spade, and smoothed down the walls of the castle with his hand. It was a very fine square castle, with a tower in the middle. He thought he would make the tower a little bigger, and turned round to get his spade—but, oh dear! oh dear! what do you think! The waves had come right up, and washed the spade away. He tried to get it back, but it was already too far off.

“It will come in presently, perhaps,” he thought, “when the tide comes right in.” So he picked up Davy’s spade, and went on making the castle. When it was quite finished Jim and Davy stood on the top of it, and waited till the water came all round it. They meant to stay on it as long as ever they could; and if you have ever stood on the top of a sand-castle when the waves are rolling up the beach you will know what fun those two boys had.

How they laughed when the waves came up, each time leaving them a smaller piece of dry sand to stand on!

Well, when at last they had to jump off, and run up the beach to get out of the way of the waves, Davy looked for his spade. Then for the first time Jim remembered that he had lost his own and had taken Davy’s.

“I shall keep it,” he said to himself.

“You have got my spade, Jim,” said Davy.

“It’s mine,” said Jim; “yours got drowned, I expect.”

“It didn’t. I know that is mine by the little notch in it.”



(1315)

How they laughed when the waves came up.

"It is mine," said Jim.

Then, I am sorry to say, they began to quarrel and to fight over the spade.

"It is not fair," said Davy; "that is my spade, and you took it."

"I don't care," said Jim; "I've got it, and I'm going to keep it."

"No, you won't," said Davy, and tried to take it; but Jim was stronger than he.

Poor Davy went home without his spade, feeling very unhappy, and saying to himself: "I know it is mine. I know it is mine."

Jim went home to his home, feeling very proud because he was so strong and had been able to keep the spade.

When the evening-time came, and his father came home from business, somehow Jim began to feel shy.

He was very, very fond of his father, and generally ran out to meet him directly he heard the front door open, but this evening he sat still.

He thought of the spade that really belonged to Davy. He would not like his father to know what he had done. He would not like his father to know he had taken something that did not belong to him.

"Well, Jim, are you too busy to come and give me a kiss this evening?"

"No, father."

"Why! what is the matter with you, sonnie?"

"Nothing, father."

All this time Jim did not look up. He felt as if, directly he looked at him, his father would know that he had not been doing what was right and fair.

"Come here," said his father sternly, but kindly too, for he loved his little boy.

Jim came and stood by his father's side. Father put his hand under Jim's chin, and lifted it up so that he could see his boy's face.

"What have you been doing," he asked, "that you are afraid of your own father, my boy?"

Then Jim, who was a truthful boy, and a brave boy too, looked at his father, and told him about the spade. Father listened very gravely, then he said: "I am disappointed in you."

Jim hung his head.

This was all very different to father's usual home-coming. On other evenings they used to play games together. Sometimes father gave Jim rides on his back, sometimes they drew pictures with coloured chalks, or sometimes they played horses. Sometimes they pretended to have a circus, and then Jim was always the lion, and roared like anything. Those were lovely games, but to-night Jim had to play alone. Father sat in his chair, and read the paper.

Poor Jim! he was not at all happy. He did not like his father to be disappointed. There was no fun in playing with toys when father sat and looked so stern, and read his paper, and only talked to mother, never to Jim.

Presently Jim crept up to his father's side.

"Please, father!" he said.

"Yes, Jim."

"Please, what shall I do?"

"What about?"

"About the spade."

"You are quite sure, then, that it is not yours?"

"Quite sure," answered Jim; "it is Davy's."

"Then you must take it back to him, and tell him you are sorry you took what did not belong to you."

Jim fetched the spade.

"May I go now?" he asked.

His father looked at him a minute, and then he said: "Yes; you had better go now, because I am sure Davy is very unhappy without his spade. Come, I will go with you."

"Thank you, father," said Jim.

So they went off together; and you can guess how pleased Davy was to have his spade, and I think he was more pleased still to be friends with Jim again, for it was the first time they had quarrelled.

When Jim and his father got home again Jim gave such a big sigh: he was so glad to think he had given Davy back his spade.

"Father!" said Jim presently.

"Yes, my boy."

"Please, will you give me a kiss now?"

Father took his little son on his knee, and kissed him, and said: "I am glad you told me all about it, Jim."

"Father," said Jim, "could we have a game now?"

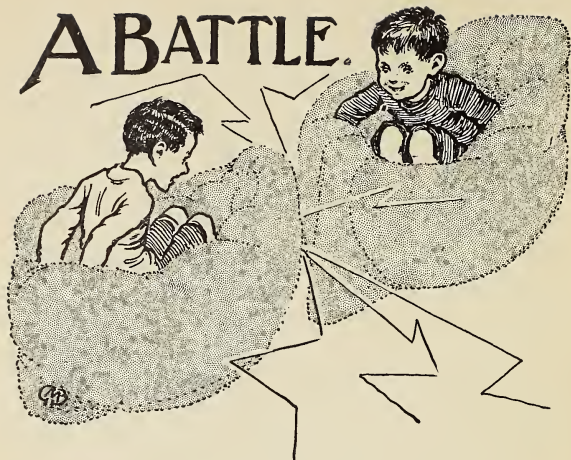
"Yes; I think we could," said his father.

"You are not disappointed any more, are you?" asked Jim.

"No; not now. Come along, up on my back, and I'll be Jumbo at the Zoo."

That was a game Jim liked, and very soon he was as happy as could be, riding on his father's back all across the room.

A BATTLE.



XII

UP on the clouds on a windy day two boys were playing at being explorers. They found a cloud just big enough for the two of them, and away they sailed right across the blue sky. Then they met another cloud.

"Let us have a battle," they said. So one boy got into the new cloud. One cloud was sailing one way, and the other was sailing the other way, and as they came towards each other they grew blacker and blacker. The boys thought it a lovely battle, and laughed with glee.

"Faster, faster!" they shouted; and faster and faster went the clouds, till at last they bumped into

each other, and there was a great bang. When that happened the boys laughed more than ever, because the bumping of the clouds made a great spark of light flash out.

"Again, again!" they shouted. "Let us do it again!"

Presently one boy looked over the edge of his cloud, right down to the earth, and there was a house—it



looked quite tiny from the cloud—and in the house he saw a little girl sitting up in bed and crying with fright because there was a thunder-storm. So those two boys just tumbled out of the clouds, and went down to the house, and jumped on the little girl's bed.

"Don't be afraid, little girl," they said; "we were having a game of battle up in the clouds, and when our boats bumped together they made that noise you heard. You call it thunder, and it frightens you, but we know it is only the clouds bumping."

"But there was lightning," said the little girl.

“There is always lightning when the clouds bump,” said the boys; “but it will not hurt you—it is part of the fun of the battle.”

“Oh!” said the girl, “and were you up in the clouds all the time?”

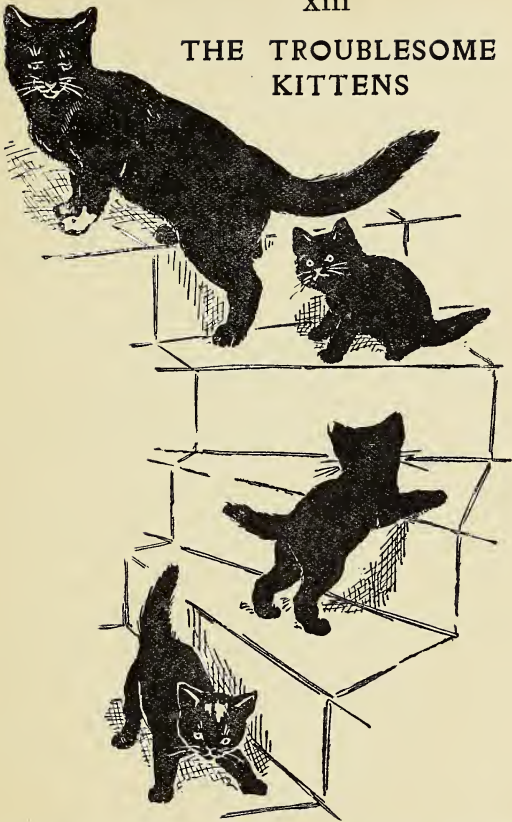
“Yes,” they answered.

“Then I don’t think I shall be afraid any more. Good-bye, boys,” she said, and gave them each a kiss.

The boys went off to have another battle, but long before they got back the little girl was fast asleep.

XIII

THE TROUBLESOME KITTENS



THERE was once a cat who had three kittens: two were black, so she called them Sambo and Blackboy; and the other she called Spot, because of a white spot on its head.

These three kittens gave their mother a great deal of trouble. She was a careful mother, and wished her children to grow up to be nice cats, but it was not easy to teach them.

The cat and her kittens lived in a kitchen in a big house, and the mother-cat knew quite well it was wrong to get up on the table and steal the food. She had been taught that when she was a little kitten, but, do you know, she could not make her kittens remember not to do it.

Sambo was the most naughty of the three about that—he was always getting on to the table and taking the food when no one was looking. His mother scolded him, but he always did it again whenever he could.

Blackboy would never drink his saucer of milk nicely, but spilt it all over. That was because he put his paws in the saucer when he drank. Of course, the milk always spilt over, and ran in a little stream along the floor. Blackboy liked drinking it off the floor, but his mother told him it was a dirty habit.

Spot was more careful about drinking her milk than Blackboy was, but she had a fancy for playing and romping all over the kitchen at meal-times. She would take a sip of milk, and then run off to play. Presently she would come back and take another sip, and then go off again.

I have heard of some little children who behave like that—who like to get down and run about at meal-times, or who spill their food on the table-cloth, or who climb on to the table and grab anything they want.

Well, the mother-cat did not think that a nice way to behave, and she wondered how to cure her kittens of their bad habits.

"Kittens," she said one day, "you are big enough to see the world. To-day I will take you upstairs that you may see the children who live in the nursery."

"What is the nursery?" asked the kittens.

"It is the room where my little master keeps all his toys and plays with his brother and sisters."

The kittens mewed with delight. They were so happy that they began running after each other up and down the kitchen.

"Come," said the mother-cat, "follow me."

The kittens followed her up the stairs. They had never walked so far before, and soon they got out of breath, and had to rest. At last, however, they arrived at the nursery door.

"Me-e-w," said the mother-cat, which meant: "Please open the door."

In a minute she heard the sound of footsteps. Her little master, Ronald, came and turned the handle. The door opened wide, and in went the cat and her kittens.

The mother picked up Sambo in her mouth, and, carrying him carefully, took him to Ronald's sister Irene, and put him in her lap.

"Oh, you dear little Sambo!" cried Irene; "I shall keep you for my own. Mother said I might have one of the kittens."

Then the mother-cat went solemnly back, picked up Blackboy, and, carrying him carefully in her mouth, gave him to Norman, who was Ronald's brother.

Norman liked Blackboy quite as much as Irene liked Sambo, and he got a ball, and began to play with him. Blackboy enjoyed romping, and he ran all over the

floor after Norman's ball, trying to catch it, and playing with it whenever he could get it between his paws. Then Sambo joined in the game, and Spot did not want to be left out, so all three kittens romped with the children until, at last, they were very tired, and had to stop.

Then the mother-cat picked up Spot, and carried her to Kathleen, Ronald's other sister, and put her in Kathleen's lap. Kathleen liked Spot, and gave her a little hug, and kissed her soft fur.

The mother-cat went up to Ronald; she had no kitten to give him, you see, and she rubbed her head against his legs, as if to say: "I am your pussy." Ronald picked her up, and put her on his shoulder, and gave her a ride on his rocking-horse. He was very fond of her.

By-and-by it was the children's tea-time. The tea was all ready on the table; the children were having their pinafores put on; the kittens were playing on the floor. All of a sudden up jumped Sambo, scrambled up the table-cloth, and spilt over the milk as he was trying to get something to eat.

"Oh! you naughty Sambo," cried Irene, taking hold of him and putting him on the floor.

By this time Blackboy had got on the table, and was licking up the milk. Spot was just running after him, but Kathleen picked her up, and said: "No; that is not the proper way for pussies to have their tea."

Well, the table did not look at all nice now, and the mother-cat began scolding the kittens.

"Now, the children will have to have their tea on that milky table-cloth, and they will not like it. It was

very bad of you to behave like that ; and you, Sambo, are the worst, because you began it."

The children sat down to tea ; but they were quite unhappy, for the table did not look nice, and the milk had splashed on the bread and into the jam.

" You must come back to the kitchen at once," the mother-cat said ; and she took them one by one, and put them outside on the landing. The children's nurse, who was giving them their tea, shut the door, and there were the cat and kittens, quite sad, left sitting on the mat. They could hear the children's voices inside, and oh ! they wanted so much to go back again.

" Come down to the kitchen," said the mother ; but the kittens held up their paws, and said : " We are sorry. Please let us go in again, and learn how children eat their food."

So the mother-cat said gently : " Me-e-w " ; and the children inside the room begged so hard that nurse forgave the kittens, and let them come in again.

The mother-cat made the kittens sit in a row by the fire, and she sat beside them.

" You see," she said, " Irene does not spill her milk, and Kathleen sits up nicely, and eats her bread and jam without dropping it on the cloth."

The little kittens said " Mew," which meant : " Yes, mother, we see."

" Norman does not get on the table and grab the food—he waits till someone gives it to him."

" Mew," said the little kittens again.

" Ronald does not get up and run round the table all the time he is having his tea."

" Mew," said the kittens.

"I want you to learn to behave as nicely as these children do," said the mother-cat.

The kittens thought it would be difficult, and Black-boy said: "Do all children sit at the table and eat their food nicely?"

"No," said the mother-cat, "not all, I am sorry to say; but all nice children *try* to behave well. I want you, my little kittens, to try to be like Irene and Norman and Kathleen and Ronald. That is why I am so often scolding you."

"You do scold us a lot, mother," said Spot.

"Yes, my dear, I am afraid I do; but you really are so troublesome. If you would mind what I say to you I should not have to scold."

After the children had had another game with the kittens nurse said: "It is bed-time now; the pussies must go back to the kitchen."

"Can't they stay with us always?" asked the children.

"Not till they have learned to behave better," was the answer.

When the kittens heard that they were sorry they had jumped on the table, and they followed their mother obediently downstairs.

Before the mother-cat put them to bed she made them stand in a row before her.

"What are the three things I want you to remember?" she asked.

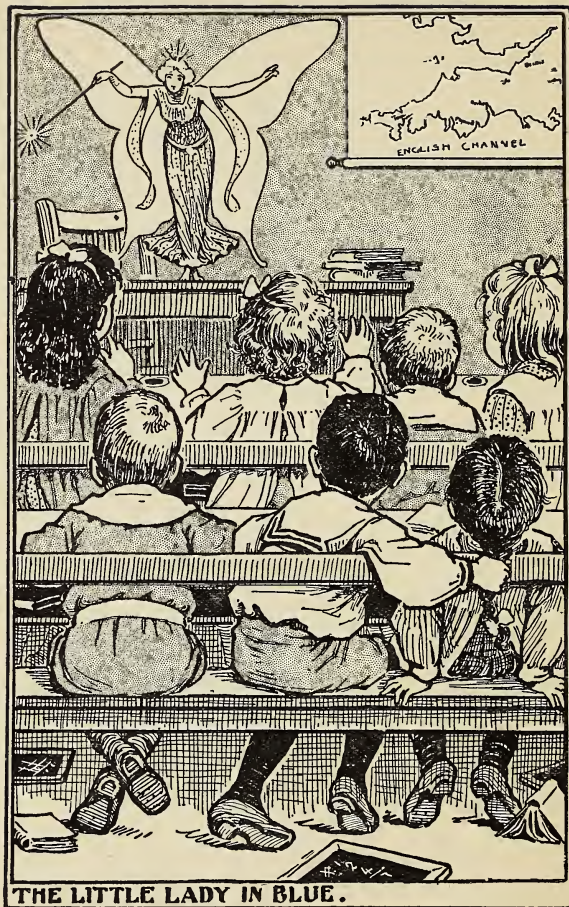
"Not to get on the table and take the food, but wait till it is given us," said Sambo.

"Not to spill over our milk," said Blackboy.

"Not to run about at meal-times, but to keep still, and eat nicely," said Spot.

“ Ah ! you remember at last. I think your visit to the nursery has done you good. Jump into bed.”

The kittens got into bed, and went to sleep, and dreamed about the games they would play when they had learned to behave like good kittens. You see, they wanted nurse to let them stay with the children for always.



THE LITTLE LADY IN BLUE.



XIV

THE LITTLE LADY IN BLUE

TWENTY little children, some boys and some girls, were sitting in their class-room at school, waiting for their teacher: she was a very punctual teacher, as a rule.

Do you know what punctual means? It means that she always came at the right time—which was nine o'clock in this school—and she had never been late.

Well, on this day of which I am going to tell you she did not come to give the children their lessons, and they could not think why. The reason was that her mother was ill. She had to go and ask a neighbour to take care of her mother for her whilst she came to school, and that made her late.

If the children had known that they would have been very sorry for her, but they did not know, and they were just beginning to get tired of waiting when something very wonderful happened.

The door opened, and, instead of their teacher, a little lady, much smaller than any of the children, came in. She was dressed in a blue silk frock, and she had wings as long as herself—such pretty wings, with colours in them like the colours in a rainbow.

The children stared at her in surprise, for they had never seen anyone like her before. She had laughing eyes

and a sweet smile and beautiful golden hair, and she said :
“ Good-morning, children. Where is your teacher ? ”

“ She hasn’t come,” answered the children—“ we don’t know why,”

The little lady lifted up her wings, and gently floated up on to the teacher’s table, and there she stood. She looked at the room.

You never saw such a room. There were books everywhere, paper dropped on the floor, slates all over the place, slate pencils in the ink-pots, blots of ink on the desks—nothing was in its proper place.

“ I do not wonder,” said the little lady, “ that your teacher is not here to-day.”

“ Why ? ” asked the children—“ she always does come.”

“ I would not come if I were a teacher. Look at your desks. I would not trouble to teach such untidy children.”

“ Who are you ? ” asked the children.

The little lady whispered softly : “ I am a fairy. I can do magic.”

“ What is magic ? ” cried the children all together.
“ Do tell us.”

The fairy took a little silver wand from under her arm, and waved it. Immediately all the children got up ; they picked up the paper that was strewn on the floor and put it in the waste-paper basket ; they picked up their slates ; they took the slate pencils out of the ink, and mopped up the blots with blotting-paper ; then they put their books together neatly.

“ That is better,” said the fairy. She waved her wand again ; and all the children whose shoe laces were undone tied them up, and all the children whose pina-

fores were unbuttoned asked the fairy to button them up, which she did willingly.

Then the children went back to their seats, and you would hardly believe what a difference all those little things made: the room looked so neat, and the children looked so tidy, and they smiled at each other to think how quickly everything had become tidy.

"Wouldn't teacher be pleased!" they said to each other; and at that very moment in she came.

"Oh! how nice and neat the room is, and you all look so tidy, too," she said. "Why, I was thinking as I came along, and saying to myself: 'Whenever will my children remember to be tidy? Shall I ever go to school and find all the desks neat, and every boy and girl tidy, too?' And now here I am, and I see you have all remembered at last."

The children clapped their hands with delight, and said: "It was the fairy; she knows how to do magic."

"So I see," said the teacher; and she looked round for the fairy, but neither she nor the children could find her—the little lady in the blue silk frock had disappeared.

"What a pity," said one of the boys; "I wanted to ask her how to do magics."

"I think," said the teacher, "I will give you a lesson on magics to-day instead of a geography lesson."

How pleased the children were.

"You can all do magics if you like," said the teacher.

"Can we?" asked the children. "How?"

"One magic is doing things well. It is the most important magic of all. If you go into an untidy room, and you think to yourself: 'This won't do; I must tidy it up,' and then you set to work, and do your

very best to make it neat, you will see the room looking as nice as if the fairy had been there with her wand."

"Shall we?" asked the children.

"Yes. If you put every chair in its place, and every book on its shelf, and pull the table-cloth straight, and pick up your toys off the floor, and put them away in their place when you are done with them, you will find that you have done a magic—the magic of tidiness, it is called."

"That is what the fairy did," said one of the children.

"Yes," said the teacher. "The fairy did it beautifully. Every magic you do you must try to do as well as you possibly can—just like the fairy's magic. Now, when you see a street with bits of paper and orange peel lying about, and cabbage leaves and things strewn all down it, so that, if the wind blows, there is quite a river of rubbish blowing along, you may be quite sure there is no magic about that road."

"Our road is like that," said one of the little girls.

"Oh dear! what a pity," said the teacher. "The fairy would not like to see that road. This is one way in which every child in this school can make a magic. Never throw anything down on the road and leave it there. Take it home, and put it in the proper place, which is the dust-bin. I am sorry to say that many grown-up people forget about the little blue lady and her way of doing magics; but, perhaps, when they were little children they did not see her often, and so they never learned properly how to do this kind of magic."

"I shall remember it when I am grown up," said one of the bigger children.

"So shall I," said the others.

"Yes; I want all you children to remember," said the teacher, "how the fairy in the blue frock came to see you. The magic of tidiness will always be useful. It is a magic that even the smallest child can help to make. Boys can put away their balls and tops, and girls can put away their skipping-ropes, and they can all keep their books tidy. Another thing they can do is to fold up their clothes neatly when they go to bed.

"Now it is time for the singing lesson," said the teacher; but just at that moment there was a little tapping sound, and the fairy appeared again, and stood on the mantelpiece. The children kissed their hands to her.

"May I tell them one thing about magics?" asked the fairy.

"Certainly," said the teacher, looking very pleased to see the fairy.

"Magics have to go on being done," said the little blue lady, smiling at the children. "They are not magics any longer if you only do them one day and then leave off. You must go on being tidy every day, or it won't be a magic. Do you understand?"

"Yes," answered the children.

"You will remember?" asked the fairy.

"Yes," said the children.

"You could do a magic in your playground, you know," said the fairy; and then she spread her wings, and flew right out of the window, and the children looked after her till she melted into the blue sky. Then they had their singing lesson but they did not forget the fairy: they thought about how they would do magics in their own homes, and they thought how their mothers would be pleased to hear about the fairy.



XV

THE LAND OF BOOKS AND TOYS

“**N**OW, my children,” said mother, “it is bed-time; put away your books, and come with me.”

Bob and Millie threw their books on to the cupboard shelf, and went at once. Mother always had a little talk with them at bed-time, and that night she reminded them about taking care of their toys and picture books.

“I have to tell you about it so often,” she said, “so have one big try this time to remember what I have said. Now good-night, my darlings.”

“Good-night, mother,” they answered. Then they turned over, and went fast to sleep.

In the night Bob and Millie were taken away to a corner of fairyland where there are ever so many books and toys. A number of little fairies came and had games with them, so they were very happy. Now, Bob and Millie were rather rough children, and they hurt the little fairies as they played with them. When that happened the Queen of the fairies came along, and the children noticed that she was crying.

“Oh! what is the matter?” asked Bob and Millie.

“You have hurt my fairies in your rough play,” said

the Queen; "see how they all lie useless on the ground."

As Millie looked at the fairies she seemed to remember who they were.

"Why, Bob," she said, "they are all our toys at home, these fairies."

"Yes," said the Queen; "and whenever a toy is broken the tears come into my eyes, because I know that one of my little fairies is hurt."

"Oh!" said Bob, "I shall always be careful of my toys now."

"We did not break them on purpose," said Millie.

"No," said the Queen; "you broke them because you were rough and careless. Sometimes, of course, toys get broken by accident, and then I do not cry so much. The fairies get better more quickly from an accident than when they are thrown about by careless children."

Bob and Millie made up their minds to be more careful of their toys in future, and the Queen said she was very glad of that.

As the two children were just going out of fairyland Bob said: "Look here, Millie, here are two lovely books. One has your name in it, and one has mine."

"How nice!" said Millie.

When they took up the picture books to look at them the books behaved in a very strange way: they slipped out of the children's hands, and ran away. Well, you can guess what the children did: they ran after them; they did not want to lose such pretty books as these.

The faster they ran the faster went the books. At last, quite tired out, the children had to stop and call to the books to wait.

"Why do you run away?" they asked.

The books stood still, but did not come near the children.

"We are afraid of you," they answered.

"Why?" asked Bob, laughing—"we shall not hurt you."

"Well, we are not so sure about that," answered the



picture books. "We went to call on some of your old books in your cupboard at home. We found the poor fairies that live inside the books were feeling very dismal and unhappy."

"Why were they unhappy?" asked Millie.

"Their clothes were all torn, and there were dirty finger-marks on their pretty little faces. When we asked them how they came to be so shabby, they said :

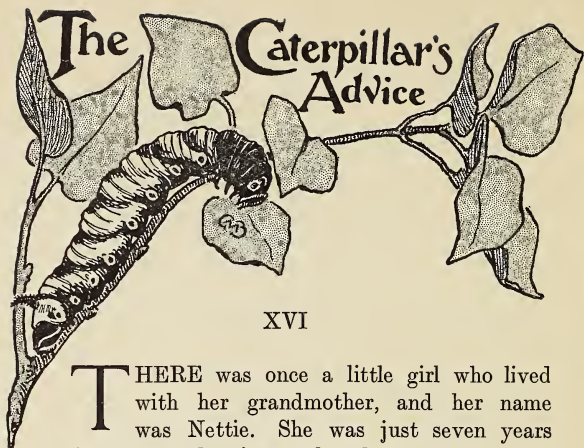
‘You see, Bob and Millie throw us about just anyhow, and so we get our clothes torn, and we don’t feel happy then. They don’t hold the books nicely, but rub their fingers up and down the pages, and then we get dirty marks on our faces—that is so very uncomfortable. They turn over the pages very carelessly, and then we get broken. That is not a nice feeling at all; so, if we were you, we would run away when the children take you up.’ That is what the fairies in all your picture books and lesson books said.”

“What a pity we did not remember what mother told us,” said Millie.

“I can’t think what we shall do now,” said Bob; “I do want to have that new book ever so much.” He thought about it quite a long time, and at last he said: “If we promise to try to take great care of you will you come home with us now?”

“We will give you one trial,” said the books, “and if you treat us nicely we will stay with you for always.”

So Bob and Millie carried home the books from fairyland, and you may be sure they were more careful of those books than they had been with the others. Besides that, they learned not to play roughly with their toys, for they remembered that the fairy Queen would have tears in her eyes if the toys got broken.



XVI

THERE was once a little girl who lived with her grandmother, and her name was Nettie. She was just seven years old. Every day it was her duty to do a piece of needlework which her grandmother gave her. She was not very fond of sewing, or of making nice, small, even stitches, but she had to do it—just as we often have to do things we don't like. You see, her grandmother wanted her to grow up a neat girl, able to mend and to make her own clothes.

In fine weather she did her sewing in the garden, and one day she sat looking about her instead of at her needlework, and the consequence was she pricked her finger. It was only a little prick, but it made a drop of blood come out on her skin, and directly she saw that she began to scream and cry.

In the midst of her screaming she heard a voice, and, looking round, she saw a caterpillar.

"Well, I never!" said the caterpillar, "and what in the world is all that noise about?"

"I've pricked my finger," she cried. "Look, it is bleeding."

"Silly child! Put it in your mouth, and suck it," said the caterpillar; "it will soon be better." He had not much pity for Nettie, because he thought she was making a great fuss about nothing.

Poor Nettie thought the prick was dreadful, and even when it left off bleeding it seemed very sore, and so she went on crying.

"Why are you crying?" asked the caterpillar.

"Because my finger hurts."

"But you need not cry, even if it does hurt," said the caterpillar.

"I must cry till it leaves off hurting."

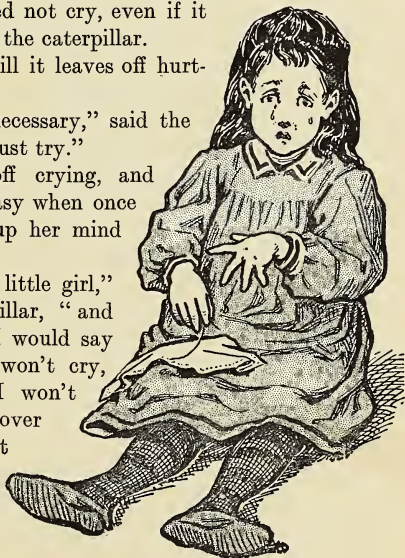
"Not at all necessary," said the caterpillar. "Just try."

Nettie left off crying, and found it quite easy when once she had made up her mind not to cry.

"If I were a little girl," said the caterpillar, "and I hurt myself, I would say to myself: 'I won't cry, I won't cry, I won't cry,'—over and over—till I did not even want to cry."

"Would you?" said Nettie.

"Yes," said the caterpillar; "I would try to be



as brave a girl as ever I could. Things don't hurt half as badly when we are brave."

"I think I'll try too," said Nettie. "Do you think you would like to be a little girl?"

The caterpillar did not answer, because it was very busy eating a leaf for its dinner. So Nettie went on with her sewing, and thought about what the caterpillar had said.

Some days afterwards Nettie was on her way to school, when she tripped over a stone, and fell down flat on the ground. She was so surprised and so much hurt that she immediately began to cry, and a lady, who was coming along the road, ran to her, and helped to pick her up.

Oh dear! oh dear! She had scraped her knees and scratched her hands, and altogether was in a sad plight. When she saw her poor knees and hands she was just going to begin to cry all the more, but she thought of the caterpillar.

"Well! I suppose there is no need to cry," she said to the lady; "so I won't."

"That is a brave girl," said the lady. "Come to my house, and I will bathe your hands and knees with some nice warm water."

She took Nettie into her house. Poor Nettie had hard work not to cry again when she looked at her poor knees and felt how sore they were; but she remembered the caterpillar, and she blinked away the tears, and she kept saying softly to herself: "I won't cry, I won't cry. I will be a brave girl," until at last she did not want to cry any more.

Then the kind lady, who had bathed her hands and knees till they were better, took her to school, and told

the teacher all about the tumble, and ended by saying : “ Nettie is a brave little girl, for she did not cry after the first minute, even though it hurt badly.”

The teacher smiled, and said : “ I am very glad to hear that.”

Nettie was happy too, because she knew she had not made a fuss, and she thought the caterpillar would not be able to call her a silly child any more.



XVII

FOUR LITTLE STORIES

I AM going to tell you four stories, quite short ones, and then I want you to tell me which of the stories you like best, and which of the children you would most like to be.

The first is about a boy named Lewis. He was quite a big boy, ten years old, and he had two little sisters. He was fond of them, but he was not always kind to them. He liked to tease them, and make them cry, then he would run after them, and say: "Cry baby! Cry baby!" That generally made them cry all the more. One day he thought of a splendid way of teasing them. What do you think he did? He got their dollies, and held them in front of the kitchen fire until all the wax melted quite away and the poor dollies had no faces left. The little girls were very, very unhappy, and cried bitterly to see their dear dollies in such a plight, and when mother came into the room she said: "Don't cry, my darlings. I know the dollies are spoilt, and I am so sorry for you, but dry your eyes, and let us see if we cannot make them some new faces."

Of course, the new faces would never be the same as the old, but it was the only thing to be done. The

children could not help crying just a little more, for the dollies looked so sad.

Lewis crept away all by himself. I think he felt rather as if he would like to cry too; at any rate, he felt sorry that he had made his little sisters so unhappy.

That is one story, here is another.

There was once a boy whose name was Vincent. He was ten years old too, and he had a little sister whom he loved dearly. Her name was Janie.

Janie had been ill, so, instead of sleeping in her own little room next to Vincent's, she had to sleep in a big room down a passage quite a long way from her brother. She had to sleep there because it was near to her mother's room, and if she wanted anything in the night her mother could easily come to her.

Janie did not much like sleeping in that room. She felt lonely without Vincent, and mother did not come to bed till long after the children's bed-time. She was a brave little girl, and though she could not go to sleep, and though she felt very lonely, she did not tell anyone, but one day Vincent found it out.

After that he used to sing at the top of his voice when he was in bed in his own room. Every night he sang all the songs he knew. Sometimes his mother used to hear him, and she wished he would not make so much noise. One night when she heard him singing she went upstairs.

"Vincent," she said, "you must leave off singing now, and go to sleep."

"But Janie is not asleep yet, mother," he explained.

"That has nothing to do with it," said his mother; "it is time you went to sleep."

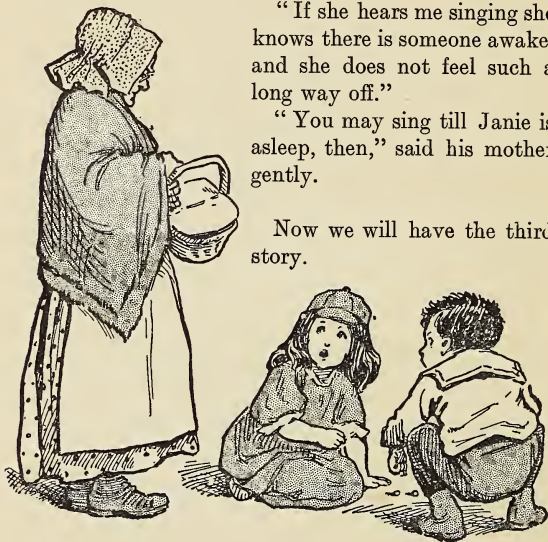
"But, mother," said the boy, "I always sing till Janie is asleep, because she feels lonely."

"Oh!" said his mother, "I did not know that."

"If she hears me singing she knows there is someone awake, and she does not feel such a long way off."

"You may sing till Janie is asleep, then," said his mother gently.

Now we will have the third story.



A little girl called Susie lived in a cottage in the country with her grandmother. Her grandmother was very busy all day, sometimes at home, sometimes working in the fields. Susie had learned to do many things for her grannie: she could wash up cups and saucers very nicely, and knew where to put them away; she

could lay the cloth for tea and fetch the milk from the farm. But she did not much like helping her grannie; she liked better to play marbles in the road with other girls and boys.

"I am going to the shop to get your boots mended," said grannie one day to Susie while she was playing marbles. "I will slip round to the farm to buy some more butter before I come back. You run in, and get the tea ready."

Susie said "Yes, grannie," but as soon as grannie was out of sight she forgot all about it. When her grandmother came back, tired out with her walk, expecting to find the table ready for tea, Susie was still playing in the road.

This is the fourth story.

There was once a little girl who liked to play about in the kitchen while her mother made the bread and cakes. She always sat in the corner, because her mother had told her not to get in the way, and she played quietly. Sometimes her little brother brought his toys too, and they played together.

One morning their mother was called away to see a visitor, and she left the children alone in the kitchen. She had finished her baking, and had washed up all the plates and spoons and tins she had been using, but she had not had time to put them away.

"How tiresome," she said; "but never mind, I can put them away presently." And she went to see her visitor.

The little girl, whose name was Connie, looked up at the table, and she said to her little brother David:

"Let us put the things away, Davy, so mother will be surprised when she comes back."

The two children put away the spoons and other things as nicely and carefully as they could, without breaking or dropping anything, and then they shut up the cupboard doors.

Mother was a long time away, but when they heard her coming they hid behind the door.

"Why!" she exclaimed as she came into the kitchen, "where are all the things gone? I know I did not put them away."

The children were laughing softly to themselves behind the door. Mother did not guess who had done it.

"Well, how strange!" she said. Then she opened the cupboard door. "Why, here they are, all put away. Who could have done it?"

The children ran out from behind the door.

"We did, mother—we did," they cried, laughing and skipping round her.

Mother was very pleased.

"What made you think of it, I wonder?" she said.

"We wanted to surprise you," said the children.

"It was a *lovely* surprise," said mother.

Now we have finished the four stories I promised you. Have you thought which you like best, and which of the children you would most like to be?



XVIII

PHYLLIS AND THE APPLE BLOSSOM

I HOPE you all know what apple blossom is. Those of you who live in the country, of course, know quite well. You see it every spring-time. It is the flower that grows on the apple-tree. The little buds are like dear little red balls, and as they open and become grown-up flowers their colour changes into pink and white. When the apples begin to grow the blossom falls off. If you have never seen any apple blossom ask someone to show you a picture of it.

Phyllis, the little girl I am going to tell you about, had always lived in the country. She did not know what London was like: she had never seen big shops or trams or omnibuses; and she had never been to a big school like the schools in London: she went to a little village school.

Now, Phyllis did not like going to school at all, and one afternoon, instead of trotting off with her brothers and sisters, she hid herself till they had gone, and then she crept away to an orchard that belonged to a farmer. It was a big orchard, with a high hedge round it, and a big wooden gate in the corner, but as Phyllis was only a small girl she managed to squeeze herself under the gate. When she was inside she saw that it was an apple orchard, and she was quite alone. All the trees were full of beautiful blossoms.

Phyllis ran about under the trees, feeling very free and

happy, and she laughed now and then to think that no one would be able to find her. By-and-by she grew tired of playing, and she sat down under a tree with large spreading branches to rest. She looked up at the blue sky and the pink-and-white blossoms, and she watched the white clouds sailing across the sky, and she thought how much more lovely it was to be out in the sunshine than being in school ; but the more she looked at the sky the more she began to have a little thought that troubled her. The thought was that she had done wrong. She closed her eyes, and tried not to think about it any more.

I feel sure she must have fallen asleep, for suddenly she opened her eyes with a start. Something very soft had fallen on to her hand. She looked, and saw it was a piece of apple blossom—such a pretty little white leaf with a pink edge. As she looked it began to move, and as it moved it began to change, and it changed and changed till it became—what do you think ? Yes ; you are right—it became a fairy.

“What are you doing here, little girl ?” the fairy asked. Phyllis did not answer.

“Have you got a holiday ?”

“No,” said Phyllis.

“Why are you not in school ?”

In a low voice Phyllis answered : “I did not want to go to school.”

“And why not ?” asked the fairy.

“Because teacher was cross.”

“Cross, was she ? I wonder why.”

“She said I was a fidget.”

“And were you a fidget ?”

“Y-e-s.”



"Then she had good reason to be cross," said the fairy. "Did she punish you?"

"Yes; she made me stand up on the form. She said if I could not keep my feet still on the ground I must learn to keep them still on the form."

"Ah!" said the fairy, "now I understand why you don't like school."

Phyllis was puzzled.

"Why don't I like school?" she asked.

"Because you do not know how to listen to your lessons."

"But I did listen," said Phyllis; "truly, I did."

"What did you listen with?" asked the fairy.

"With my ears, of course," said Phyllis, laughing.

"But you did not listen with your feet. We listen with our feet as well as with our ears."

"Do we?" asked Phyllis in surprise. "Oh! fairy, I believe that is only your make-up."

"It is quite true," said the fairy. "Now, I will talk to you, and you kick your feet on the ground all the time I am talking, and then see how much you can hear."

So while the fairy talked Phyllis kicked the ground under her feet, and she found that she was so busy kicking that she could only hear a word here and there.

"Now, was I right?" asked the fairy.

"Yes," Phyllis replied.

"You see," the fairy went on, "we can listen with our ears and our feet, but if we do not listen with our feet—that is, if we do not keep our feet still—we cannot listen properly with our ears."

By this time Phyllis was very interested in the fairy. "Tell me some more, please," she said.

"Your eyes can help you to listen too," the fairy said. "If you look at me when I talk, and if you keep your feet still at the same time, you can hear better what I say. There is something else you ought to listen with. Can you guess what it is?"

"Hands?" asked Phyllis.

"Quite right. If you keep your hands still you can listen better."

"Try," said Phyllis.

"Oh, what a funny way to ask!" said the fairy, looking a little shocked; and Phyllis hung her head.

"Will you please try?" she said at last; and the fairy said: "Yes; certainly."

Phyllis listened with her ears and her eyes and her hands and her feet, and she heard every word the fairy said.

This is what she heard: "Go back to school, little Phyllis. Tell your teacher you are sorry you ran away this afternoon. Tell her you have learned how to listen, and you will try to behave better to-morrow, and the next day and the next, and all the rest of the days."

"But I don't think I can be good," Phyllis said, with a sigh.

"If you try you can."

Phyllis shook her head.

"I've tried hard," she said.

"Then try again," said the fairy cheerfully. "Begin with trying to listen to your lessons as you listened to me. The more you try the easier it will get."

The fairy began to melt as she stood in Phyllis's hand; but Phyllis cried: "Oh! fairy, don't go yet."

"I must go now, afternoon school is over, and the children have all gone home," answered the fairy; and

she melted and melted until nothing was left but the little white leaf with the pink edge.

Phyllis laid the apple blossom down on the grass very gently. "Good-bye, fairy," she said. And she went home. When she got to the cottage where she lived her mother and teacher were standing in the garden. They had been out to look for her, and could not find her.

"I am sorry," Phyllis began as she came in at the gate; but her mother was angry, and hardly listened.

"Go straight to bed, Phyllis," she said.

Phyllis went in, and went straight to bed. She knew she had done wrong, so she bore her mother's punishment bravely, and did not cry about it, although she wanted to very badly.

The next morning, when school was over, the teacher said: "Phyllis, I want to have a little talk with you."

Phyllis thought she was going to be punished for running away to the orchard; but she had made a mistake: her teacher knew that she had been punished once for that, and she did not mean to punish her again. She just took Phyllis on her knee, and said kindly: "Why did you stay away from school yesterday?"

Phyllis hung her head, and put her finger in her mouth, which did not look at all pretty.

"Did you think I was cross with you in the morning?" asked the teacher.

Phyllis took her finger out of her mouth, and then she looked quite nice again.

"Yes," she answered.

"You were right; I was cross," said the teacher, still very kindly; "and you know, sometimes, when

little girls and boys are naughty, it is difficult for teachers not to be cross."

"Is it?" said Phyllis. "Do you have to try hard about things like we do?"

"Yes," answered the teacher. "And now I am sorry I was cross with you, because I see it only made you more naughty."

Phyllis sat very still, thinking. Then she told the teacher about the fairy who came out of the apple blossom. The teacher liked hearing about it, and when Phyllis had finished she said: "What a nice fairy! I'll tell you what we will do: we will help each other. You shall try to listen to your lessons—just as the fairy said, with your feet and hands and eyes as well as your ears—and I will try not to be cross. It is much easier when we help each other. One of the best ways in which little children can help their teacher is by listening to what she says, and trying to do what she tells them."

Phyllis promised to do her best, and I know she did. The teacher kept her part of the promise too, as well as helping Phyllis to keep hers. When Phyllis grew up she was an obedient girl, and a clever girl besides. She knew how to do all sorts of useful things. Do you know why? Because when she was a little child she learned *how to listen*. Listening, besides being useful, is also a part of behaving nicely.

Phyllis was grateful to the fairy all her life; and I think she must always have been fond of apple blossom, because of that day in the orchard.

I wonder if that fairy was a dream, or if it was a real fairy! I have never seen a real fairy—have you? I should so like to get a peep at one.



XIX

THE BEAUTIFUL CITY

THERE was once on a time a man who had been told that there was a beautiful city a long way off, where the sun was always shining and everybody was always happy. He wanted very much to go to that city ; but he was a poor man, and had not enough money to get a ticket and go by train. Well, he wanted so much to get there that he made up his mind to walk.

The town where he lived was a dull, grey sort of place, where the sun did not often shine, and the man started off very hopefully, quite sure that he could soon reach the beautiful city.

Before he had gone many miles his feet were so sore that he had to sit down by the roadside. Then said he to his feet : " Why are you so tiresome ? Why will you walk only such a little way ? "

His feet answered : " We are so tired and so thirsty."

So the man got up, and hobbled to a stream near by, and bathed his feet in the water, and when he had dried them he found that his toes were quite strong again, and he was able to go on his journey.

At first the man thought it was a great bother to have to keep on washing them, but after a while he

found that if he kept them very clean and nice he could get on much faster on his way to the beautiful city.

One day, as he sat at the table in a little inn, having his dinner, his body suddenly said: "I will not eat any dinner; I do not like it."

"And, pray, why not?" asked the man, for he wanted to be quick, and get on his way.

"It does not taste nice."

"But it is very nice. You must not be so fanciful," said the man. "Eat it at once."

But his body said "No."

"Why doesn't it taste nice?" asked the man, beginning to feel angry because the time was being wasted in talking.

"Well," said his body, "if you would wash your hands before you give it me it would taste all right. I do not like to eat dirty food."

The man looked at his hands, and saw they were very dirty, so he went and washed them. After that the body was quite pleased to have the bread and cheese the man gave it.

Soon the man started on his journey again. He was only half way to the city; but two things he remembered carefully—one was to keep his feet clean and comfortable, and the other was to wash his hands before eating his food. Why did he remember, do you think? Why, because those two things helped him to get on faster to that beautiful city he wanted to find.

He walked on and on, and at last, as he drew near to his journey's end, he took the wrong turning, and lost his way. Seeing a woman coming towards him he

asked her to tell him which way he ought to go, and she very kindly told him. She told him three times, but he could not hear a word she said. Then he got rather angry



with his ears, and said : " How silly you are ! Why do you not listen when this kind woman tells me the way ? "

His ears answered : " You have forgotten to wash us, and so we cannot hear. "

So the man went on till he came to a pump by the wayside, and there he washed himself, and especially his ears, because he wanted to ask someone to tell him the way to the beautiful city, and it was no use asking until he could hear properly. After he had washed he went on again, and the first person he met was an old man.

"Can you tell me the way to the beautiful city, please?" he asked.

"Certainly," said the old man. "Go straight on along this road. In the distance there is a big white gate—do you see it?"

The man looked; but he could not see the gate, something seemed to have got into his eyes, and made them smart.

"No," he said; "I don't see it; my eyes are hurting."

"Then I am sorry I cannot help you," said the old man. "You will never get to the beautiful city if you are not more careful of your eyes." And he passed on.

The man stood still.

"Now, eyes," he said, "what is the matter with you? I thought I washed you when I washed my face and ears just now."

"But you did not wash in the corners," said the eyes, "and now we are so sore that it hurts to open our eyelids."

"I am really very sorry," said the man; and he went back to the pump.

When at last he was quite clean—face and eyes and ears and hands and feet—he went on his journey again, and very soon he saw the big white gate. He had still some way to go; but he did not mind, for his heart was light and his body was strong and well, and he felt as

if he had come to the end of his troubles. But he had not—not quite—for just as he got within sight of the city he had such a dreadful pain in his face, and it made him feel so ill and miserable he could not go on.

“What is the matter *now*?” he asked, in despair. “What do you want, you stupid teeth?” He had got the toothache.

“Well!” said his teeth, “you forgot to bring your tooth-brush. You can’t expect us to be well and happy if you do not keep us clean.”

So the man went into a shop in the village, and bought a tooth-brush with his very last pennies, and he carefully cleaned his teeth, and then at last he was able to go on his journey happily. Whenever he came to a river he bathed all over in the clear cold water, and felt greatly refreshed. Every day when he woke up he remembered all the things that needed washing so carefully—and you know why he remembered them: it was because they helped him to find the beautiful city he longed to see.

At last he came to it. And it was quite true what the people had told him: the sun always shone brightly in that city, and the people there were always happy. He heard them singing as he came into the city, and he saw all the butterflies and the merry children and the busy people, and he thought it would be nice to stay there always and always. He was very glad he had found it at last.

The name of that place was the City of Good Health, and the man would never have got there at all if he had not been careful about being clean.

Doris and the Jampot.



XX

DORIS was five years old, and, like many other little girls—and boys too—she was very fond of jam. Now, it once happened that Doris's love of jam taught her a very useful piece of knowledge, and it is that I am going to tell you about.

One day Doris was playing on the floor with her toys. She was building a fine tower with some new bricks she had had given her, and her doll was sitting beside her, and looking on. The doll's name was Sally—and Sally had very splendid eyes. She was Doris's favourite, and always went out with her for a walk, and had many privileges that other dolls do not have.

Doris played a long time quite quietly and happily ; but after a while she got rather tired of being alone. She jumped up from the floor, and was going in search of her brothers and sister when she saw something that made her stop.

What do you think it was ? It was a pot of jam standing on the cupboard. She looked at it longingly a moment, and then she glanced round the room. Sally's black eyes were staring very hard at her, and Sally's voice said : " But you know mother has forbidden you to touch things on the cupboard."

Doris paused. The jam was very close to her—or rather, she was very close to the jam—and there was no one in the room. A new thought came into her mind that had never come before.

" There is no one here to see if I touch it," she said. " You can't speak, so *you* can't tell."

Sally looked at her steadily.

" No ; there is no one to tell," Sally said.

Dollies only speak doll language, and it is only the little girls they belong to who can understand them.

" Why shouldn't I have just a little, tiny taste ? " said Doris coaxingly.

" I would not, if I were you," answered Sally. " If your mother asked you afterwards if you had had the jam, you would have to say ' Yes ; I did.' "

Doris paused, and considered.

" I needn't," she said. " Mother will not know I had any if I say ' No.' "

Sally stared very hard indeed.

" You would not tell an untruth ! " she exclaimed.

Doris was very quiet for a little while, then she said :
“ Mother would not know if I did.”

“ No,” Sally answered ; “ of course she would not ; but *you* would know, and you would always have a little thought peeping up in your mind and telling you that you had not spoken the truth. You would be so ashamed of that little thought each time it popped up that by-and-by it would make you unhappy ; perhaps you would never be able to forget it.”

Doris listened to Sally, and turned away from the cupboard ; but the next moment the temptation was too strong, and she quickly dipped her finger in the jam, and then put it in her mouth. She did this three times. The jam was lovely. Then she sat down on the floor again, and went on playing with her toys.

Every now and then she looked up, and saw Sally’s black eyes staring at her. Every time she looked at Sally she felt her own little cheeks grow hot—Sally knew what she had done.

“ Go away,” Doris said at last. “ I won’t have you staring at me like that ; it is rude to stare.”

She took poor Sally, and buried her under the sofa cushion.

Later in the day, when Doris and her brothers and sister were having their tea, their mother said : “ I am afraid someone has been eating the jam that was left on the cupboard this morning : was it you, Cyril ? ”

Cyril was Doris’s elder brother, and he looked up at once, and answered : “ No, mother ! ”

“ You, Freddie ? ” she asked of the younger boy ; and he too answered at once : “ No, mother ! ”

“ Then you, Gracie ? ”

"No, mother!"

Doris was getting hotter and hotter. She knew her turn was coming.

"Doris, did you take any jam this morning?"

And Doris, with a very red face, said: "No, mother!"

"Are you telling me the truth?"

"Yes, mother," said Doris, trying to look up at her mother and smile.

"Very well, dear; I believe you."

Doris gave a sigh of relief. After tea she went and told Sally. Sally did not say a single word, and her black eyes stared harder than ever.

All the next day Doris played with her toys as quietly and happily as a mouse, except that every now and then, just as Sally had said, the thought of what she had done peeped up, and made her feel sad. She kept Sally under the sofa cushion, and she tried to forget all about the jam. Sometimes she managed to, but not always.

The day after that she and her sister Gracie went to a party. Doris had not been feeling happy all day; but she was looking forward to the party, where she hoped she would forget all her woes. Sally was still hidden under the sofa cushion; but Doris could not help thinking of what she had said, and thinking of what friends she and Sally used to be, and she could not help wishing she had done as Sally told her.

Well, she went to the party. She played games with the other children, and enjoyed herself very much, until suddenly she remembered Sally, and remembered her mother's kind voice when she said: "Very well, dear; I believe you." It made her heart ache when she thought of how she had deceived her mother.

Somehow the games did not seem half so nice after that, and Doris could not enjoy herself a bit. When tea-time came, and all the children were sitting up to tea, and talking merrily, and eating the nice jam and cakes, and having great fun, Doris sat very still, and did not eat anything.

Presently a lady asked her : " Would you like some jam, Doris dear ? " And Doris, to everyone's surprise, burst out crying. No one could understand what was the matter with her, and all she could say was : " I want mother ! I want mother ! "

She was so unhappy that at last a kind gentleman wrapped her up in a big shawl, and carried her home.

When she got there she stopped crying, and went into the sitting-room, while her mother said good-bye to the gentleman, and thanked him for bringing her home.

Doris crept round to the sofa, and took Sally up in her arms.

" Sally," she said, " mother believed it. That was the dreadful part—she believed me when I said what was not true."

" Yes," said Sally. " If we have told a lie, and done a thing we ought not to, we can't forget it. It makes us more unhappy to know we have deceived someone we love than all the punishments in the world."

" Yes," said Doris. " If mother had found me out it would not have been as bad as this dreadful feeling I've got. What shall I do ? "

" Tell her all about it," was Sally's advice.

" I don't like to. Perhaps she won't believe me this time."

"Yes; she will. Mothers always understand, and always forgive. Tell her everything."

Doris heard her mother coming back into the room. She dropped Sally on the floor, and ran to her, sobbing out the whole story.

"It was the jam at the party that made me cry, because it made me think of what I had done," she told her mother.

At first mother looked sad and serious, but when she had heard all about the trouble, from beginning to end, she took Doris up in her arms, and kissed her.

"I shall not punish you, Doris," she said, "because I think you have learned a lesson you will never forget. What you did was wrong; but I will trust you never to tell an untruth again, and I know you will own it another time when you have done wrong, however difficult it may be."

Doris put both her arms round her mother's neck, and kissed her; but she could not speak, she was so happy at the thought that, in spite of all, *mother trusted her still*.

By-and-by she went and picked up Sally off the floor, and hugged her.

"You dear old dolly," she said, "I love you ever such a lot, and I wish I had not been unkind to you."

Sally was so pleased to see Doris happy again that she quickly forgave her, and they had a game of "Ring a ring of roses" to make up for the past sorrows.

In the evening, when Doris, a merry and happy little

girl once more, put her dolly to bed, she tucked her up very comfy, and, bending down over her tenderly, said: "Thank you, Sally, for telling me what to do. I am so happy now that mother knows all about the jam." Sally smiled—a dolly smile—and her black eyes shone bright as she stared up at the ceiling.

In her dolly heart she felt quite sure Doris would never want to tell an untruth again. What do you think?



XXI

WEEDS

THERE was once on a time a little boy who had a nice garden. The boy's name was Rex, and his garden was called "The Garden of Sweet Flowers."

Rex had planted many things in his garden. He had sweet peas and carnations and anemones, and lots of other things; and he had also some beautiful rose-trees that the gardener had planted.

Rex was very proud of his garden, and used to go every day to look at it, and to water the flowers, and every day he picked a sweet-scented flower for his mother to wear.

As the summer went on something else grew up in the garden—something Rex was quite certain he had not planted. It grew all over the garden wherever there was any space left without flowers, sometimes even in the midst of the flowers themselves. Some of it grew up, and climbed over the rose-trees, and spoiled the best roses by clutching them so tight.

Now Rex was very angry with these green plants that grew up everywhere, and he gave them a lot of water to try to drown them, but the water only made

them grow faster. He was quite sure *he* had not planted such stupid things. He did not know what to do with them, and so he sat down on his barrow to think about it. But the more he thought the more cross he got. He was very cross at last, and stamped his feet.

His face did not look at all nice with that cross look on it, and I don't believe his mother would have known him if she had happened to come out just then.

Rex sat on his wheelbarrow, getting crosser and crosser.

Presently he heard footsteps, and, looking up, he saw a very old man, over six feet high, with a long white beard.

"Are you Father Christmas?" he asked when the old man came near enough to hear.

"No," said the old man.

"Who are you?"

"I am a gardener."

"Oh!" said Rex, brightening up. He thought he would show the gardener what a nice garden he had got, but then he remembered all those little green plants that had grown, and grown, and spoiled his flowers.

The gardener, who was old and wise, looked at Rex, and smiled, but when he saw that Rex was beginning to get cross again at the thought of the poor garden he sat down on the barrow beside him, and began to talk to him.

"Do you know what all these green things are?" he asked.

"No," said Rex. "Do, please, tell me."

"Weeds," said the old man—"and they must be pulled up, or you will have no flowers at all. You see

they are taking all the food out of the ground that the flowers want."

Rex clapped his hands.

"Thank you for telling me," he said. "I tried to drown them with water," he added; "but it was no good: they grew more."

"Yes," said the old gardener; "of course they did. They like water: it helps them to grow."

Rex jumped off his wheelbarrow, and began to pull off the tops of the weeds as fast as he could. He clapped his hands again.

"How stupid I was not to think of cutting them down before," he said, laughing. "They don't show a bit now, and my garden will soon be nice again."

The old gardener looked at him, and smiled a little sadly.

"I am afraid that is no use at all," he said. "It makes the garden look nice now, but in a few days the weeds will all have grown up again. The roots are still in the ground, and it is the roots that take away the food the flowers want."

Rex, who had been so happy a minute before, was disappointed. He began to kick the stones on the gravel path, and he got very cross indeed.

Now, we all know quite well that getting cross does not help matters in the least, and the old gardener knew that too.

"What you have to do," he said, looking at Rex rather sternly, "is to dig up all the roots of the weeds. You will not have time to do it all in one day, but you can mark out a piece for each time, and get one place clear of weeds every day. Before long your garden

will be as pretty as ever, and the rose-trees won't be spoilt."

Rex still looked rather cross, for he knew it would



be a great deal of trouble.

"One thing I will tell you," said the gardener. "Being cross about it will only make it more difficult. If we spend our strength in being cross we have not so much left to do the weeding with."

Rex turned away, feeling ashamed that the gardener had seen how cross he was.

"I will tell you one thing more before I go," said

the gardener: "crossness is like a weed. In the garden of our hearts there are sometimes as many weeds as in your lovely flower garden. If we let ourselves go on being cross about things it is just the same as when you watered your weeds. Water made the weeds grow stronger and quicker; keeping on being cross makes the weed of crossness in our hearts grow quicker too."

Rex looked at the gardener in surprise; he had never thought of that before.

"The best way," went on the old man, "is to set to work to dig up the roots, and put them away on the rubbish heap, because if we do that they cannot grow. And the best way when we are cross is to say of ourselves: 'I am only cross because I sit down and think about what has gone wrong. A sensible boy will not stop to be cross; he will set to work to put things right, and when they are put right he will have forgotten he ever wanted to be cross.'"

The old man smiled at Rex. "Don't you think so?" he asked.

"Yes, I do," said Rex. He set to work at once to dig up the weeds in his garden, and the old gardener knelt down beside him, and helped; and before long Rex was as happy as a sand-boy, and he and the old gardener laughed and worked together all the morning.

When it was dinner-time, and Rex went to put away his barrow, the old gardener slipped away unseen. Rex could not find him, though he hunted for him everywhere; but he remembered what the old man had told him, and the next day he went on weeding his garden, and for many days after, and he really found it quite easy not to be cross.



XXII

THE BAG OF SWEETS

IT was holiday time, and all the school children had put away their books, and thought themselves very lucky not to have to go to school for three whole weeks.

A small girl, whose name was Nina, and several other children, started off one morning to the recreation ground to have a game. Nina was six years old, and her little friends were all about the same age.

It was a bright, sunny morning, and the children played with their dolls, and made daisy chains to hang round their necks, and ran about under the trees or played at being shopkeepers.

While they were playing an old gentleman came along who knew Nina, and he sat down on a seat near where the children were playing, and he called out :
“ Nina, come here ! ”

When she ran up to him with a smiling face, and said :
“ Good-morning, sir,” he answered : “ Good-morning, Nina. I have bought some sweets for you and your little friends. You may divide them, and you must see that each child has three sweets.”

Nina said, “ Thank you.” Then she called the other children.



"You must see that each child has three sweets."

Up they all came running fast, and when they saw the sweets they clapped their hands with delight. The old gentleman went away, feeling glad, because the children were happy.

Nina had three friends that she liked more than the others, and she thought to herself: "I will give the others two each, and then there will be more for my three friends."

So that is what she did.

Now, Nina had made a beautiful daisy chain, which she took home with her, and hung over the foot of her bed, so that she might see it in the morning when she woke.

In the night she had a dream. She dreamed that each daisy had the face of a child, and each face was the face of one of her playfellows. One child said: "You only gave me two sweets, and the gentleman said I might have three." All the other children said the same.

"Why did you give us only two sweets?" they asked; and Nina, who always spoke the truth, answered: "Because I love Gertie and Nellie and Florrie best, and I wanted them to have the most."

"It was not fair, though," said the children. And then they disappeared, and the daisy faces came back again.

One of the daisies had a bag of chocolates, which she divided among all the other daisies. And Nina looked on, and wished she could have some too; but the daisy took no notice of her, and that made her feel very much left out.

"Mayn't I have some too?" she asked; but the daisy did not answer.

Nina remembered how nice the sweets had tasted, and she noticed that the daisies were enjoying theirs

very much. The daisy gave an extra sweet to one of her friends, and said : " That is Nina's share, but you may have it, because I like you."

" Oh ! but that is not fair ! " cried Nina.

" Then why did you give your three friends more than the others ? " asked the daisy.

" Well, because I love them."

" But that does not make it fair, does it ? "

Nina thought a minute. " No," she said ; " it does not."

" You see," said the daisy, " the old gentleman told you to divide them equally—to give the same share to each."

" Yes," said Nina.

" And now," said the daisy, " now that I have given your share to somebody else, you know what it feels like."

In her dream Nina thought to herself : " Yes ; now I know what it feels like when somebody else eats my share."

The daisies looked at her.

" Oh ! daisies," she said, " I did not mean to be unfair ; please tell the children I did not." And just then she woke up, and knew that it was a dream.

When she was dressed she went and told the children she was sorry, and then she went and found the old gentleman, and told him all about it.

The old gentleman patted her on the head kindly, and said : " I am glad you told me. You see, when things are given you to divide you must not keep some for the people you like best, but you must give each child a fair share, because if you don't you will make somebody feel unhappy."

" Yes," said Nina ; " I see now."



XXIII

THE STORY OF THE OLD STRANGE MAN

HE was not really old, but he looked old. He was dressed in a beautiful green robe, made of richest silk, that covered him like a cloak. He had white hair and a white beard, but his eyes were as bright as a dicky-bird's eyes, and so I am sure he could not have been really old.

The Old Strange Man—that was the children's name for him—used to go round to the houses and fetch the children whenever it was playtime. The grown-up people could never catch even a glimpse of him, for he passed so quickly; but the children always heard his footsteps as he came along the streets, and they ran out to meet him.

They loved him dearly; and they followed wherever he went, and listened to all he said. He told them stories and sang them songs all about themselves or the children who lived in other countries.

Once he told them about a little boy called Hans, who lived long years ago, when there were no schools like there are now. Almost all that Hans ever learnt was to read and to write a little. Nobody taught him songs or told him stories. He was not a very happy

little boy, and he used to make up stories for himself. They were fairy stories, and they used to comfort him on the days when he felt sad. When he grew older he would tell his stories to other people, and sometimes these people laughed at him and said he was silly. They must have been people who didn't like having



stories told them. Hans did not take any notice when they laughed at him, and he went on making stories for himself just the same as before, even when he was grown up. By-and-by he wrote them down, so that all the little children in the world might read them and enjoy them as much as he did. His name was Hans Andersen, and he lived in a country called Denmark.

Well, the Old Strange Man, who loved the children and told them about Hans, came one day as usual to fetch his little friends at playtime, and, as usual, they heard his footsteps, and ran out to meet him. They gathered round him, and took his hand and held him by his cloak, and went off with him to the woods.

It was the end of summer, and all the trees had lost their green dresses, for the leaves had turned to yellow or brown or red. The Old Strange Man took the children into the wood, and as they sat on the ground around him he promised them a treat.

"To-morrow," he said, "will be a whole holiday. It will be playtime all day."

"Yes," said the children. "We are so happy, because to-morrow we can be with you the whole time."

The Old Strange Man smiled at them, and those bright eyes of his twinkled and shone.

"To-morrow I shall come at seven o'clock in the morning, and when you hear me singing the 'Birds' Song' you will know I have come to wake you up."

That was the song the children loved best of all, and they said eagerly: "Yes; we shall know."

"When you hear me you must answer at once with a chirp, and then I shall know you are awake."

"Yes, yes," said the children. "Oh, what fun it will be!"

"You must meet me," said the Old Strange Man, "at the edge of the common half-an-hour later, and we will go away together."

The children clapped their hands.

"Where are we going?" they asked.

"We will ride on the clouds across the sea, and

find the home where Hans lived. Should you like that ? ”

“ Yes, we should,” answered the children.

“ And we will see other things too, and I will sing you songs that you have never heard—songs that will make you dance with joy ; and I will tell you stories, and show you——”

“ What ? ” asked the children. “ What will you show us ? ”

The Old Strange Man bent down towards the children, and whispered : “ I will show you the pictures I have painted on the sky.”

The children looked at him, and wondered what he meant.

“ You must be sure to come directly I call,” he said. “ Be prompt. Do you know that word ? It means, be ready to come *at once*—to answer *at once*. Don’t forget ! ”

“ We shall not forget,” said the children as they ran home to tea.

“ Good-bye till to-morrow,” they called out to the Old Strange Man, kissing their hands to him. “ What fun we shall have to-morrow ! ”

The children went home, wondering very much what sort of pictures their dear playmate had painted on the sky. They looked up, and tried to find them, but all they could see was the blue sky and the sun shining very brightly.

In the morning the Old Strange Man came for the children, and as he came along the streets he sang the “ Birds’ Song ” that the children knew so well.

As each boy heard it he opened his eyes, and he said

to himself: "Just one moment more, and then I will answer him."

As each girl heard it she turned in bed, and said to herself: "He is not quite here; I will answer in a minute."

The Old Strange Man came along the streets, and as he came he sang the "Birds' Song," and only three out of all those children answered "Chirp" when he sang. Only three met him at the common. Only three went riding with him on the clouds. Only three saw his pictures in the sky. All the others were a minute too late. Then for the first time they remembered the new word their playmate had taught them—the word "prompt," which means be ready, and answer *at once*—come *at once*.

It was a sad day for those children. They had no dear playmate, and they almost wished it was not a holiday.

In the evening, as the children were sitting on the common, feeling as if they would like to cry, they suddenly started up altogether; their faces were all smiles, they no longer wanted to cry. Do you know why that was? They heard the footsteps of the Old Strange Man.

Oh! how they ran to meet him! How they clung to him, saying: "We are so sorry, we are so sorry."

"It was a pity you were not ready," said the Old Strange Man; "we have had a lovely holiday, we four."

"Tell us about it! Please tell us about it!" cried the children, wishing more than ever that they had been ready in time; but the Old Strange Man shook his head.

"Perhaps you shall come some day and see for yourselves," he said, sitting down on the grass, and gathering the children round him. The three who had gone with him in the morning sat nearest to him, and now and then he smiled at them, and they smiled back at him, remembering where they had been and all they had seen.

The other children were beginning to get sad again, when their dear playmate said: "Do not think about it any more; do not be unhappy; but remember next time to be—what was the word I taught you?"

"Prompt," said the children at once.

"And what does it mean?"

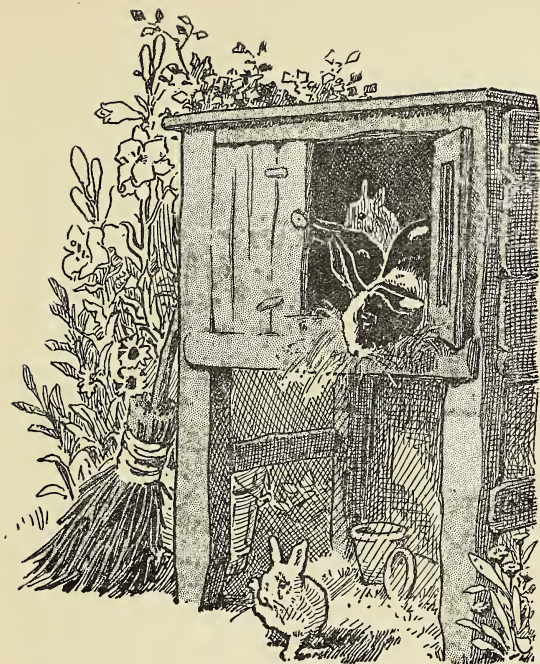
"Be ready to do things at once."

"Yes," said the Old Strange Man; "be ready for everything. You won't forget, will you? I know you won't, so don't be sad. Now, shall I sing you the 'Fairies' Good-night'?"

"Yes, please," said the children; and they settled themselves to listen.

I cannot tell you the song, because the Old Strange Man never sings to me, only to the children; but it must have been a nice song, for when it was finished the children all began to sing too. As they walked home together they sang the "Birds' Song"—and they only sang that when they were very happy.

Still, although they were happy again, they did not forget the new word the Old Strange Man had taught them, and they never forgot its meaning.



XXIV

THE BUNNY HUTCH

IN a big, roomy hutch in somebody's garden lived a family of tame rabbits — six all together: a mother, a father, and four children. They were all white, and they had pink eyes.

Now, the mother-rabbit was very fond of her children

and often warned them not to try, as she sometimes saw them doing, to get out of the hutch.

"If you do you are sure to fall," she said, "for you are not old enough yet to jump."

The three eldest bunnies listened to what their mother said, and stayed in the hutch, but the youngest one—whose name was Billy—was always longing to get out, and see what the world was like outside.

"Very well," said the mother, "I do not really mind you going out to have a look at the world; all I will say is this, if you go you know what to expect. You are very small, and it is a big jump from this hutch to the ground. If you hurt yourself you will only have yourself to blame."

Little Billy thought the jump did not look so very big, and on the first opportunity he got out of the hutch, and—jumped. He did not know properly how to jump yet, because he was so young, and so he came down bang on the ground. It was such a surprise to him that he looked round him quite bewildered. For a moment he could not understand where he was. The hutch looked so far up above his head, and he knew he would never be strong enough to jump back again. He began to think he would have been wiser to stay where he was—with his mother in the hutch.

Then he put his paw in his eye, and began to cry, making a little sound that his mother heard directly. She was busy getting the dinner ready; but she heard it, and came at once to the door to see if Billy were really hurt or not.

"Well!" she said, "and what is the matter now, my son?"

"I've hurt myself," he cried, "and I can't get back."

"I warned you that you would hurt yourself," said his mother, who saw that he was really more frightened than hurt. "If you *will* do what older and wiser rabbits tell you it is better not to do—why, you must put up with getting a little hurt sometimes."

"But can I never come back to the hutch?" asked Billy.

"Father shall come and fetch you directly," she said.

Billy looked about him while he was waiting, and he felt very small in such a big world. He had never been out of the hutch before, and everything was strange.

There are a good many boys and girls who do not like to be in strange places all alone, and I am sure they will know how the little bunny felt, and will be sorry for him.

Soon after a boy came whistling along near the bunny hutch, and he saw Billy. Billy saw him, and felt frightened. He thought the boy a dreadful person; but the boy was not dreadful at all, for he picked up Billy, and stroked him.

"Poor bunny!" he said, "did you tumble out of the hutch?" And then he put the little rabbit back beside his mother, and oh! Billy was so happy and so thankful to be in his home once more.

When it was bed-time, and his mother bade him good-night, Billy said to her: "Perhaps it is better to do what you tell me after all; the world is a big, strange place."

"Ah, yes!" said his mother; "it is a big, strange place for little bunnies. When you get big enough to

understand it, you will like it, but while you are small it is best to stay in the hutch."

"Yes; I think so too," said Billy; "but it will be nice when I am a big bunny. What was that creature who picked me up?"

"That was a boy."

"I would like to be a boy," said Billy; "he seems a kind sort of person."

"You can't be a boy," answered his mother, "because you are a rabbit, but you can be like the boy in one way."

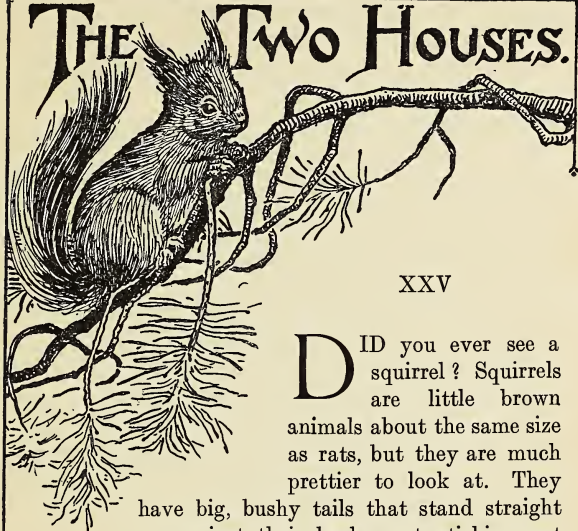
"Can I?"

"Yes; you can always be kind to other bunnies, just as the boy was kind to you."

"That would be nice. Yes; I will try to be like that boy," said Billy.

So, you see, even Billy's tumble, though it hurt at the time, had done some good, as it had taught him how nice and kind boys can be.

THE TWO HOUSES.



XXV

D ID you ever see a squirrel? Squirrels are little brown animals about the same size as rats, but they are much prettier to look at. They have big, bushy tails that stand straight up against their backs, not sticking out behind them like pussies' tails. They live in trees, and they can run ever so fast.

There was once a tame squirrel who lived in a cage. He belonged to a lady who was very fond of him, and he had grown so fond of her that even when she let him out of his cage he never wanted to go back to his old home in the woods.

She called him "Friskabout," because he was such a lively little fellow, and he always knew his name directly.

Now, this lady, besides being fond of the squirrel, was also very fond of children, and often had little friends to stay with her. Friskabout was glad when the children came, because they could play with him.

I will tell you about two boys and two girls who came to stay with this lady.

She was their auntie, and she particularly liked having them with her—except for one reason. The reason was that they were careless—that is, they did not take the trouble to do things nicely. Their auntie was very sorry, because she did not want them to grow up into careless men and women.

One day she had a little talk with the squirrel about them, and the squirrel said he would try to cure them.

“Let me out of my cage,” he said, “and then leave them to me.”

So when the children came into the garden they found the squirrel whisking about among the flower-beds. The two boys, Harry and Phil, ran after him, and then, much to their surprise, they heard the squirrel say : “Tell Molly and Ruth to come too.”

“But where ?” asked the boys.

“Never mind where,” answered the squirrel ; “just follow me.”

The boys called to their sisters, and all four children went off with the squirrel, wondering where he meant to take them.

Friskabout took them through a gap in the garden hedge, and across the meadows, till he came to where two houses stood side by side. One house had nice clean curtains, and looked bright and pleasant ; the other had torn curtains, and did not look at all tidy.

“Which house shall we go into ?” asked the squirrel.

“Oh ! this one, please,” said Molly ; “it looks so pretty.”

Friskabout told the children to open the door and go in.

"Rub your boots on the mat," the squirrel said. "We must not spoil this beautiful, clean hall."

The house was as pretty inside as out. The carpets looked so bright, and the chairs and tables and sideboards were polished till they shone. Friskabout took them into the sitting-room.

"How would you like to live here?" he asked.

"I should like it if there were some toys to play with," said little Ruth.

"Yes," added Phil, "so should I; but I suppose there are no children living here, so there are no toys."

The squirrel opened a cupboard. It was full of toys and books, all carefully put away while the children were at school.

Harry and Phil, Molly and Ruth rushed at the cupboard, and began pulling out the toys.

"Oh no," said the squirrel, "the toys are not yours; you must not play with them unless the children say you may. Put them all back as you found them."

Our four little friends did not like doing that; but the squirrel was a very strict little fellow, and he made them obey him.

After all was tidy, and the cupboard door was shut, Friskabout took them to see the bedrooms where the children slept. Here it was just the same. Everything was in order, and the furniture looked as new as if it had only just come out of the shop.

"Now we will go into the other house," said the squirrel.

In the other house things were different. The hall was covered with muddy footmarks, the carpets were shabby, and dirty with footmarks as well. The

chairs and tables were scratched all over. The tablecloths had slits in them, the curtains were torn. The cupboard door was open, and all sorts of toys lay on the floor, most of them broken and useless.

"You would not care to play with these toys much, would you?" asked the squirrel.

"No," said Harry; "it is no fun playing with broken toys."

Upstairs in the bedrooms everything was untidy; the chairs were so broken that they were hardly safe to sit on.

"I do not like this house," said Molly. "If I could choose I would have the other one."

"I think," said little Ruth, "this house is something like it is at home."

"Ah!" said the squirrel, "if your home is like this it cannot be very comfortable to live in, and, of course, you know why."

"No; I don't," said Ruth.

"When a house looks like this one there is always a reason why."

"Please tell us," said Molly.

Just at that moment they heard the front door open, and four children, very much like themselves, came into the house.

"Stay very quiet, and watch," said the squirrel.

So the children stayed very quiet, and those other children, who lived in the house, came in. They did not rub their shoes on the mat, so the hall got even dirtier. They took off their hats and caps, and left them on the sitting-room table. They did not look where they were going, but kicked against the chairs

as they passed. They trod on their toys—they were all lying about on the floor, you see—and then got cross because the toys were broken, and not fit to play with. They threw down their lesson books on the floor.

“It is like we are at home,” said Phil in a whisper.

Presently the mother of the children who lived in the house came and sent them upstairs to get tidy for dinner. The little girls’ pinafores were creased and untidy; they had forgotten, I expect, to fold them up nicely when they took them off. The boys could not find any soap to wash their hands, because they had left it in the water before they went to school, and it had all melted. Then they began to quarrel about whose fault it was.

“They do not seem to be very happy children, do they?” said Molly. “I wonder why!”

“Come back to the other house,” said Friskabout, “and we will try to find out why.”

When they were back in the nice house he said: “Stay quiet, and watch.”

In a few moments four children came in at the front door. They were just about the same ages as Harry and Phil, Molly and Ruth. They were talking and laughing, and seemed quite happy. The girls came in first, and the boys after. They all rubbed their shoes on the mat. The boys hung up their caps, and the girls put their hats away. Then they went into the sitting-room. There was a shelf kept for school books, and the boys, and girls too, put away their books. After that they knew they were free to play. They got out some toys.

The boys played with their engine. “Leicester

Express!" called out the big boy as he wound it up, and sent it rushing across the table.

"Don't let the express go again till I've got my cows out of the way," said one of the little girls. She was setting out her toy farmyard. "They must not get run over."

Her brother was in a hurry to go on with his game, and said: "Be quick then, and get them out of the way." He did not want to break them.

These children played with their toys till in came their mother, and said: "Now clear up, my chicks, and get ready for dinner."

All the toys were carefully put away, so that nothing should get broken, and off went the children to wash their hands before dinner.

"How happy they are," said Phil.

"Come," said Friskabout, "we will go back to auntie."

The children wanted to stay in this nice house, but Friskabout knew that auntie would be looking out for them by this time.

So she was: they saw her as they came into the garden. She smiled when she saw them, and she was both pleased and surprised to notice that they all rubbed their shoes on the mat before coming in.

Molly began eagerly to tell her about the two houses; while Friskabout ran into his cage, hunted out a nut he had hidden there, and began to crack it.

Auntie was very interested in the two houses.

"Why do you think the children in the nice house were happier than the children in the other?" she asked.

"Because the nice house was clean and tidy," said Harry.

"And why was it clean and tidy, I wonder?"

"Because the children put their things away," said little Ruth.

"Yes; that must have been the reason," said auntie.

"Friskabout told us there was always a reason why," said Molly, who had been standing by the squirrel's cage, "but he won't speak a word now."

"Perhaps I can tell you the reason," said auntie. "Shall I?"

"Yes, please," answered the children.

"Well, to begin with, the children in the nice house had learned to be *careful*; and the children in the other house had not: *they* never tidied up."

"Tidying up is only for girls," said Harry, who was eight, and thought he knew a great deal.

"Oh! you are quite wrong about that, Harry," said auntie. "Tidying up is for everybody, for boys quite as much as girls."

Harry and Phil looked at each other. They thought of the nice, tidy house Friskabout had taken them to, and they remembered that the boys there had been quite as tidy as the girls.

"The next reason," auntie went on, "why the children in the nice house were happier is that they took care of their toys, and so they always had something to amuse themselves with. That made them happy, and it made them ready to help each other in their games."

"But why did the table-cloths and things look so new?" asked Molly.

"Ah! that was because the children looked where they were going, and were careful not to kick against the chairs, so the paint and polish did not get scratched. They did not get mother's scissors, and cut holes in the cloth. I don't think those children ever played with scissors at all. They had toys to play with instead—nice toys that were not broken."

"Is that all the reason why they were happy?" asked little Ruth.

"Not quite all. One reason was that they were careful of each other's toys as well as their own. You know we must take even more care of the toys that are lent to us than we do of our own."

A moment Ruth looked at her aunt, then she went and picked up a doll which she had left on the floor. It was Molly's doll. Molly had lent it to her to play with.

"Every boy and girl can help," said auntie, "to keep the chairs and tables from getting scratched. I once saw a little boy," she added, "writing on the back of a chair with his pencil. That was not the way to help, was it? He made some very ugly scribbles on the chair."

Phil looked up, and said: "I did."

"I think it is a pity to do that. It spoils the nice tables and chairs. Don't you think so?"

"I won't do it any more," Phil promised.

"And I will be careful not to cut the table-cloth," said Molly.

"That is right; I am glad you understand what I have been telling you. Now, I think it is time to get ready for dinner."

While the children were getting ready auntie was talking to the squirrel.

"That was a splendid idea of yours, Friskabout," she said. "I am glad you tried it. Now that the children have seen the difference between a nice house and a dirty, untidy one, I believe they will always help to keep things nice."

The squirrel was still nibbling his nut, and his little eyes were twinkling merrily. He seemed to say: "Yes, yes; I think they will. Tell them," he said, "that the children *who take care* are happy, that the children *who take care* are loved by everybody, by children and mothers and teachers—by all grown-ups, and even by squirrels."

His mistress smiled, and gave him another nut, and promised to tell the children.



XXVI

DONALD'S CRUTCHES

ONCE upon a time there lived a boy who was a cripple. He had to walk on crutches because his poor legs were so weak they could not carry him. This boy's name was Donald, and he had several brothers and sisters, but he could not run about and play as well as they could. He used to hobble about after them as well as he could; but as he grew older he got quite clever in using his crutches, and could run almost as fast as other children.

Donald lived in a little country place, and his mother and father, and his teacher at school, all took great care of him, because he was not strong and well like most boys.

Sometimes the other children used to laugh at him, and would try to take away his crutches, to see what he would do without them. They used to make him very angry, and then he would hit them with his crutch, and make them cry.

One day a little fellow named Dick was showing Donald some acorns he had found, and Donald, who was sitting down on the bank by the roadside, had put his crutches on the ground beside him while he helped Dick to count the acorns.

The other children thought this a good time to pay him out for hitting them, so one of them went and got his crutches while he was not looking.

Donald was very happy playing with the acorns, and did not notice what the others were doing, but when he wanted to get up and go home he found he had nothing to walk with. His little friend Dick was much too small to carry him, and he could not walk without his crutches. He looked round him helplessly. The children had run right away out of sight. He called and called at the top of his voice, but nobody heard him. He tried to stand up on his poor, weak legs, but it was no use. Then, feeling very sad and helpless, he lay back on the grass, and burst into tears.

"Don't cry, Don," said Dick; "I will go and fetch back your crutches; don't cry."

Dick started off; but he could not find the other children, for they had run away into the wood. Not knowing what to do, Dick went to Don's mother, and told her all about it, so she came at once, and carried her boy back to the cottage where they lived. She told him not to cry, but to be a brave boy till the crutches were found again.

Well, what do you suppose had happened to the crutches?

The children had gone into the wood, and as they ran the crutches began to change. A little frightened, and very surprised, the children dropped them on the ground. Then the crutches stood up of themselves, and they were still changing and changing. The children looked on with great wonder; and what do you think they saw? Why, the crutches had changed into

fairies. They wore rosy pink dresses, and dainty red shoes, and they looked so lovely and so kind.

"Oh! children," they cried, "what have you done?"

Quite sadly the fairies picked up the children, and carried them away to a mossy bank, and set them down bump, and left them there.

Then the two fairies stood a little way off, and looked at the children, and the children thought: "We will not stay here, or night will come, and we shall not be able to see our way out of the wood," but when they tried to get up they found they were all little cripples, with legs that were no use to them at all.

"Ah!" said the fairies, "you did not know how sad it is not to be able to walk by yourselves, did you?"

"No," said the children. "Oh! please let us go home now, or we shall be so late."

"You may go home," said the fairies.

"But we can't," said the children; "our legs will not carry us."

Then the fairies set to work, and made some crutches, two for each child, and the children said: "Oh! thank you, dear fairies; now, perhaps, if we are quick we can get home before it is dark."

When they began to try to walk with crutches they found out how difficult it is when you are not used to it, and they wished very much indeed they could have back their own proper legs.

"It must be dreadfully tiresome," said the children, "always to have to walk with sticks instead of legs."

"Yes," said the fairies; "but it is better than not being able to walk at all. Poor Donald cannot even



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Then the children began to be very sorry for what
they had done.

hobble home, now that you have taken his crutches away."

Then the children began to be very sorry for what they had done, and the more sorry they got the more they felt their own legs coming back again, and at last they threw away the crutches that the fairies had given them, and began to dance and sing for joy, because their own proper legs had grown again.

Then the fairies began to change back into crutches, and, just before they were quite changed, they said: "Now that you know how hard it is not to be able to walk we are sure you will always help Donald, and be kind to him, instead of teasing him and making him unhappy."

"Oh yes!" said the children.

After that the fairies quite changed into crutches again; and the children picked them up, and ran home to Donald, and told him they were very, very sorry to have been so unkind.

One little girl came and whispered to him: "We did not mean to be unkind; we did it for fun; but we won't do it any more, because we know now that your crutches are really fairies who come to help you to walk." And she told him all that had happened in the wood.

"If they are fairies, Don," said his mother, "you must remember that they will not like you to hit the boys and girls with them."

"No," said Don; "I expect they won't. I will never hit the children again." He was so happy to have his crutches back. "Now," he said, "I am going to find my little friend Dick, who was kind to me when

I was left all alone without anyone to carry me home. I know he will be pleased to see I can walk again."

"We will find him for you, Don," said the other children.

"I will find him," said Don, "but you may come to help me look for him if you like."

So they all went off together.

That was how those children learned to be kind and thoughtful for the boy who could not walk by himself.

The Difficult Sum.



XXVII

ONCE on a time there was a school for blackbirds. It was in a big tree in a field, and every day the young blackbirds came from their nests to this school to learn lessons. You know what blackbirds are like: they are bigger than sparrows, and they have black bodies and black wings and yellow beaks.

One morning at school the teacher, who was also a blackbird, gave the birds a sum that was not at all easy to do—at least, it was not easy for the blackbirds. They could add up nicely, and generally got the sums right, but they could not take away. Now, the sum they had to do was this: “If you have twelve buttercups, and

give seven to your mother, how many are left ? ” Not really difficult, is it ?

There was one little blackbird who found it very hard indeed. He could not think out the answer at all. The other blackbirds were working away ; but this little fellow got tired of thinking, and he looked at the slate of a blackbird next to him, and he saw the answer to the sum was five.

“ Well ! ” he thought, “ I don’t see why that shouldn’t be right.” And he put down five on his own slate as the answer to the sum.

When the teacher came with a red pencil to mark the sums she put a big R, for right, to the little blackbird’s sum, and patted his head, and said : “ Well done ! ”

“ Well done ! ” That did not sound quite right in the blackbird’s ears, as he had copied the answer from someone else.

All the rest of the day he was very thoughtful, and when school was over he flew off to a house on the other side of the field. At one of the windows stood a little girl looking out, and he alighted on the window-sill, and put his little head on one side, and looked at her.

The little girl said : “ How do you do, blackbird ? ”

“ I am not very well,” answered the blackbird—“ at least, I am not very happy.”

“ Why are you sad ? ” asked the child, whose name was Violet.

“ I don’t know exactly,” said the blackbird.

“ Have you been to school to-day ? ”

“ Yes,” said the blackbird ; and he began to tell her all about his lessons. When he told about the sum

the little girl said: "Oh! Blackie dear! of course you are sad if you copied somebody else's sum. Why, it wasn't fair!"

"Wasn't it?" said Blackie.

"No. You did not work the sum. The other blackbird had yours right and his own as well."

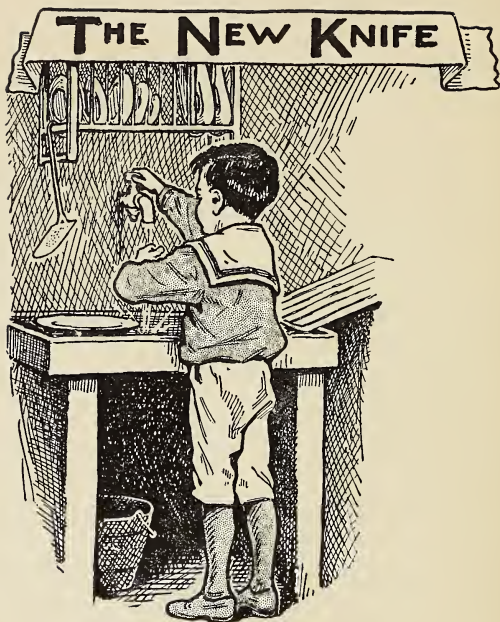
"Yes," said Blackie.

"Well! don't you see," said Violet, "of course you were sad, because when your teacher said: 'Well done!' you knew inside your little birdie heart that you had not done well."

"Yes; of course I did."

"I expect you did not know any better, because you are just a little bird, but boys and girls know it isn't fair to copy other people's sums. Don't do it any more, Blackie, will you?"

"No; of course I won't. I will go and tell my teacher. I did not mean to be unfair. I am very glad you explained. Good-bye. I will come again soon." And off flew Blackie to set matters right.



XXVIII

ERIC was a boy of seven, and on his birthday his father had given him sixpence to buy something that he liked. So one day off went Eric into the town, feeling a very rich boy with a whole sixpence. He looked in all the shops, but for a long time could not make up his mind what to buy. At last he decided to buy a pocket-knife, so that he could sharpen his own pencils, and cut up wood when he wanted to.

When he got home, and showed the knife to his mother, she said : " Oh ! Eric, do be careful when you use it. I am so afraid you will cut yourself."

Eric laughed, and patted his mother's hand, and said : " Don't be afraid, mother ; I won't cut myself. I will be very, very careful."

" Come here, Eric," said his father, " and I will show you how to use a knife properly, and then there will not be much fear."

So Eric learned how to sharpen pencils without cutting himself.

One day he was out in the garden making a mast for his toy boat out of a bit of firewood. He was working away very hard, and singing all the time—but suddenly the knife slipped, and cut his finger.

Eric looked, and saw that the cut was a big one, and it was bleeding. Just at the first moment he felt rather frightened, but then he thought of his mother.

" I will not let mother see, in case it makes her sorry," said Eric to himself. So he ran quickly, and put his finger under the tap, and let the cold water run on to it. Then the bleeding began to stop, and he got out his handkerchief, and wound it tight round.

Just at that moment mother called out : " Eric ! Eric ! "

" Yes, mother," said Eric, running to her.

" It is tea-time, run and wash your hands. Why, what is the matter ? Have you cut your finger ? "

" Yes, mother ; but you need not mind a bit, because I've tied it all up."

" Why did you not come and tell me, dear, and I would have tied it up for you."

"I did not want you to be unhappy about it bleeding," said Eric.

Mother gave him a big kiss, and said: "You dear little boy to think of that! Does it hurt very much?"

"Only a little now," said Eric; "and I don't mind, so as you are not frightened."

"No; I am not frightened now," said his mother, "but I expect I should have been if my boy had not been thoughtful enough to tie it up before he came in. And now you must let me wash your hands for you, because poor, wounded heroes cannot wash their own hands, can they?"

"I expect they can't," said Eric, laughing to think of himself as a wounded hero. He was proud to think he had kept mother from being frightened and sad about his cut.



XXIX

THERE was a great bustling and rustling in the wood. All the leaves on all the trees were trembling with excitement. The little ants and spiders were running about on the ground with a great deal of business to do—that was why they got up so early. It was beginning to get light, when a whispering sound was heard in the trees. At that sound all the fairies came out again, though night-time was almost over, and they ought to have been in their homes. Such numbers of fairies there were, and their dresses were made of all the colours you like best.

“Who are you?” asked the fairies of the whisper in the trees.

“I am the South-West Wind.”

“Ah!” said the fairies, clapping their hands. “What is your message?”

Then the South-West Wind whispered his message to the fairies, and they said: “How soon will she be here?”

“Almost directly,” said the Wind.

Then suddenly the wood was quite light, and bright as day; all the little birds in the trees were awake, and twittering happy songs. The fairies danced and sang, and ran hand-in-hand about the wood, and the spiders worked very hard at their webs. Presently the sun shone down, and the sky looked very high up above the treetops, and somebody came softly, softly, softly through the wood. She was a beautiful lady. Her dress was made of roses, and her eyes were like stars, and on her hair she had a wreath of honeysuckle. As she came through the wood all the little, budding flowers opened wide to greet her; and the foxgloves—they had been waiting for her, I think—all raised their lovely heads, and stood up very tall and straight, that she might see their faces, and know how glad they were that she had come.

As she passed on through the wood the birds sang with joy, till it seemed as if their little throats would break; and the ants ran happily about, and the spiders made their silvery webs very speedily—all because they were so glad to see this beautiful lady.

She wandered on, on, farther into the wood, and as she went butterflies flew after her—lovely butterflies—white and yellow and brown and spotted; and wherever she went bees hummed about her. The flies woke up, and stretched their wings, and flew after her, circling in and out above her as she moved. Such a buzzing noise they made, and it was all because the Queen had come, and they were so pleased to see her.

A little rabbit popped his small head out from his hole, and, after looking a moment at all the beauty

around him, he turned, and ran fast down his hole, and, bursting in upon the rest of his family, he cried : “ Summer is come ! Summer is come ! She is here in the wood.”

When they heard that all the rabbits ran out of their holes, and went hopping and skipping and jumping and running after the beautiful lady, as happy as the day was long.



XXX

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER CAKE

FREDDIE was the sort of boy who liked to see everything that was going on. He was about seven years old, and he had just made up his mind that, when he grew up, he would be a carpenter.

It was holiday time, and he went out one morning into the little town where he lived, and found his way to the carpenter's shop.

"Please," he said, "will you show me how to be a carpenter?"

The carpenter smiled, and said: "Yes, I will; but it will take rather a long time."

"Well! we might *begin*," said Freddie. "Will you begin to show me, please?"

"Very well," said the carpenter. "You see I am making a cupboard. I have two sides, and a back, and two doors ready——"

Just then the baker called to see how much bread the carpenter wanted that day. Freddie, who always wanted to know about everything, asked the baker to show him how to make bread.

"Come along, then," said the baker. "I will take you to my shop, and you shall see."

"I will come back directly I have seen the bread made," said Freddie to the carpenter; and off he went to the baker's shop.

There he was taken into the bakehouse, and the baker showed him the flour and the yeast, and began to tell him how bread was made; but just at that moment a boy came in with coal for the fire, and Freddie thought it would be nice to go and fetch coal with the boy. So off he went. The boy showed him how to fill the scuttle with coal, and then he was going to help him carry it back. As they were crossing the yard Freddie spied through a gate a man digging in the garden. He left the boy to carry in the coal alone, and went to speak to the man.

"What are you digging?" he asked.

"Potatoes," answered the man.

"Let me see how potatoes grow," said Freddie; and the man had just begun to show him when a girl came out of the house to fetch some potatoes to cook for dinner.

"How do you cook potatoes?" asked Freddie.

"If you come into my kitchen you shall see," said the girl.

So Freddie left the man to go on digging, and went with the girl.

"You first wash the potatoes," said the girl, "and then——"

But Freddie was looking out of the window, and not listening. Out in the street he saw a boy leading a horse.

"Where is he going, I wonder?" said Freddie.

"To the forge, I expect," answered the girl, "to get

the horse shod. Now, if you want to see the potatoes——”

Freddie had already gone—he wanted to see the blacksmith put on the horse’s shoes. When he got into the street, however, the boy and the horse were no longer in sight. He ran after them, but could not catch them up. Presently he came upon a queer old woman sitting by the roadside.

“How do you do?” she said. “I have been looking for you.”

“Why have you been looking for me?” he asked.

“I want you to tell me all that you have done to-day.”

Freddie thought a minute.

“I went to the carpenter’s to learn how to make cupboards.”

“And did you learn?” asked the old woman.

“N-o-o,” answered Freddie; “I came on to the baker’s to see how he made bread.”

“And did you see how he made bread?”

“N-o-o,” said Freddie; “I went out with the boy to get the coal.”

“And did not go back, I suppose?”

“No; I saw a man digging potatoes, and I wanted to know how potatoes grow.”

“And do you know now how potatoes grow?”

“No,” said Freddie, beginning to feel how little he had really learned that day after all—“no; I went in to see how potatoes are cooked.”

“How are they cooked?”

“I don’t know,” answered Freddie. “I did not stop long enough to see; I wanted to go with the boy to the blacksmith’s, and——”



(1315)

"I will give you," said the woman, "a piece of my wonderful cake."

The old woman began to laugh.

"Why, you silly boy!" she said, "you will grow up without knowing anything at all if you run off to something fresh every minute."

"It does seem like it," said Freddie.

"I will give you," said the woman, "a piece of my wonderful cake—that will help you to learn one thing first before you go on to try to learn other things. It is much better to learn one thing at a time."

The old woman took a piece of cake from her bag, and gave it to him.

"When you feel as if you want to run off instead of waiting to see the horse shod just nibble a little piece of this, and you will want to stay to see all that happens."

"Thank you," said Freddie. "What a funny cake!"

"It is called the cake of perseverance," said the old woman. "That is a long word, isn't it?"

"Yes," answered Freddie; "I never heard of it before."

"It means, when you have begun to learn about a thing, going on and on till you have finished it, not leaving off in the middle."

"Oh!" said Freddie. "Is it a nice cake?"

"It is rather hard to bite, but it is nice, all the same."

"I will try it," said Freddie. He was going to thank the old woman, but she disappeared, so he ate a piece of the cake, and went on his way to the blacksmith's to see the horse shod.

The blacksmith was just going to put on an iron shoe—you know what a horseshoe is like, don't you?—but first he began to cut and trim the horse's hoof.

"Doesn't it hurt the poor horse?" asked Freddie.

"Oh no," said the blacksmith—"not if you are careful."

Just then a milk cart came by, and Freddie was going off to speak to the milkman when he remembered his cake, and ate a little piece. That made him want to stay to see what the blacksmith was doing.

"I should not like to have my feet cut," he said; "I am sure it would hurt."

"It does not hurt you when your mother cuts your toe nails, does it?" asked the blacksmith.

"Oh no!" said Freddie.

"That is because your toe nail cannot feel," said the blacksmith; "and a horse's hoof is really a toe nail."

"Oh!" said Freddie, "I did not know that."

He began to feel quite hungry for that cake, so he had a piece more. Then he stayed till the blacksmith had quite finished shoeing the horse. The most wonderful part about that cake was that the more of it Freddie ate the bigger it grew.

APPENDIX.

A GRADUATED SYLLABUS OF MORAL AND CIVIC INSTRUCTION FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

N.B.—"The purpose of the Public Elementary School is to form and strengthen the character, and to develop the intelligence, of the children entrusted to it."—BOARD OF EDUCATION. (Introduction to the Education Code for 1904 and 1905.)

"The good moral training which a school should give cannot be left to chance; on this side, no less than on the intellectual side, the purpose of the teacher must be clearly conceived and intelligently carried out."—BOARD OF EDUCATION. ("Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and others concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools." 1905.)

THIS Syllabus is the result of the prolonged deliberations of a Special Committee of the Moral Instruction League, assisted by expert advice from many directions. As the subject of direct moral instruction in schools is new, it is well to say a word, based on the experience of specialist teachers, in regard to one or two important matters.

There is no single moral instruction method. According to the individual genius of the teacher, the vehicle may be biography, natural history, or a number of varied illustrations. Some are in favour of a series of connected lessons on one subject, such as Temperance or Truthfulness, while others prefer a less exhaustive treatment. A strong feeling exists that illustrations should be chosen from Nature and History rather than from fiction, though it depends on the teacher and the age of the child whether the life immediately around or the larger storehouse of present-day and past history is drawn upon. A valuable fund of material will be found by observing the reflective and active life of the children themselves. The

teacher should extol the good, and show its reasonableness and its beauty, rather than warn against evil and insist on its hatefulness. In every case the teaching should be concrete, and short poems, quotations, and proverbs may with advantage be committed to memory. The teacher should connect the lessons as closely as possible, and lead the child to see the oneness of all the duties.

The figures in the Syllabus do not necessarily imply that the lessons are to be given in that particular order. Further, it is intended that in each Standard there should be recapitulation of the work of previous Standards adapted to the stage then reached by the child.

The aim of moral instruction is to form the *character* of the child. With this object in view, the scholar's intellect should be regarded mainly as the channel through which to influence his feelings, purposes, and acts. The teacher must constantly bear this in mind, since knowledge about morality has missed its aim when no moral response is awakened in the child. A moral instruction lesson ought to appeal to the scholar's feelings, and also to affect his habits and his will.

The teacher is expected to take a broad and organic view of life, and at every opportunity to inculcate a love of inanimate Nature, of plant and animal life, of science, and of the beautiful. He should encourage a love of the thorough in all its forms, the conscious acquisition of habits of thoroughness in every activity and relation of life, and the progressive development of an ideal of individual and social perfection. The child should be led to see that the moral ideal applies to feelings and thoughts as much as to outward conduct, and that the time to be good and to form good habits is now, although the goodness appropriate for the child should also pave the way for the goodness required of the adult.

SYLLABUS OF MORAL AND CIVIC INSTRUCTION.

INFANTS.

(Under 7 years.)

1. CLEANLINESS.

- (a) Clean hands, faces, and clothes.
- (b) Clean habits—*e.g.*, the proper use of the lavatory.

2. TIDINESS.

- (a) In the home, school, and street.
- (b) Personal tidiness.
- (c) Care of furniture, books, toys, and other property.

3. MANNERS.

- (a) Greetings at home and at school.
- (b) Behaviour at meals.
- (c) Punctuality and promptness.

4. KINDNESS.

- (a) Love to parents.
- (b) Kindness to each other in the home, school, and street.
- (c) Kindness to animals—*e.g.*, dogs and cats.

5. FAIRNESS.

- (a) Mine and thine.
- (b) Fairness towards others.

6. TRUTHFULNESS.

- (a) Telling the truth.
- (b) Confidence in parents and teachers to be encouraged.

7. COURAGE.

- (a) When alone.
- (b) Darkness, shadows, and strange noises.

STANDARD I.

(7-8 years.)

1. CLEANLINESS.

- (a) Use and care of parts of the body—*e.g.*, hair, eyes, ears, nose, lips, teeth, hands, and feet.
- (b) Care of clothing.

2. MANNERS.

- (a) In eating and drinking : moderation.
- (b) In question and answer : politeness.
- (c) In bearing : quietness, unobtrusiveness, patience in waiting.
- (d) Punctuality in the home and the school.

3. KINDNESS.

- (a) To companions at play.
- (b) To pet animals—*e.g.*, rabbits.
- (c) To flies, worms, and other harmless creatures.
- (d) To birds : their nests.

4. GRATITUDE.

To parents and teachers.

5. FAIRNESS.

Ungrudging disposition, especially when favours are distributed, or when the success of others is under notice.

6. TRUTHFULNESS.

- (a) In speech : the importance of exactness ; the avoidance of exaggeration.
- (b) In manner : the importance of simplicity ; the avoidance of affectation.

7. COURAGE.

- (a) Cheerful endurance of little pains and discomforts ; manliness and womanliness.
- (b) Tale-bearing : when justifiable—*e.g.*, to protect the weak or innocent.
- (c) In relation to creatures inspiring instinctive fear in children—*e.g.*, mice, frogs, spiders, and beetles.

STANDARD II.

(8-9 years.)

1. CLEANLINESS.

- (a) In the home.
- (b) In the school, playground, and street—*e.g.*, to desist from scattering paper and orange peel.
- (c) Neatness in person and in work.

2. MANNERS.

- (a) In speech : courtesy and clearness.
- (b) In bearing : orderliness in the streets.
- (c) How to perform a simple service—*e.g.*, how to carry a message.

3. HONESTY.

- (a) Respect for the property of others.

(b) Restoration of lost property.

(c) Preserving and protecting property at home, at school, in parks, and other public places.

(d) In work.

4. JUSTICE.

(a) To companions, in the school, playground, and home.

(b) To the less fortunate—*e.g.*, the weak, imbeciles, stammerers, deformed.

5. TRUTHFULNESS.

Promises and confidences.

6. COURAGE.

(a) To follow good example and to resist bad example.

(b) To confess faults or accidents.

(c) Under difficulties : self-reliance.

(d) In bad weather—*e.g.*, not to fear thunder and lightning.

7. SELF-CONTROL.

(a) In food : preference for plain and wholesome fare.

(b) In bearing : the avoidance of wilfulness, peevishness, obstinacy, sulkiness, violent temper, and quarrelling.

(c) In speech : the avoidance of rudeness and hastiness.

(d) In thought : checking of evil thoughts.

8. WORK.

(a) Helping in the home.

(b) The value of industry in the school.

STANDARD III.

(9–10 years.)

1. MANNERS.

(a) Refinement of language.

(b) Behaviour in public places, decency.

(c) Unselfishness.

(d) Respectfulness towards the aged.

2. HUMANITY.

(a) Personal help to those in need.

(b) Making other people happy.

(c) Kindness to animals.

3. OBEDIENCE.

- (a) Immediate and hearty obedience to parents and teachers.
- (b) Respect for rules and regulations.

4. JUSTICE.

- (a) In thought, word, and act.
- (b) Forbearance.
- (c) Forgiveness, remembering our own faults.

5. TRUTHFULNESS.

- (a) All the truth, and nothing but the truth.
- (b) Avoidance of prevarication and withholding part of the truth.
- (c) Avoidance of deception through manner or gesture.
- (d) The importance of frankness.

6. ORDER.

- (a) The value of system—*e.g.*, a place for everything, and everything in its place.
- (b) The value of punctuality.
- (c) The value of promptness.

7. PERSEVERANCE.

- (a) In work : hard or distasteful tasks.
- (b) In play : fighting out a lost game.
- (c) In self-improvement.

STANDARD IV.

(10-11 years.)

1. MANNERS.

- (a) Cheerfulness : evil of grumbling and fault-finding.
- (b) Self-consciousness : evil of conceit and shyness.
- (c) Modesty.
- (d) Self-respect.

2. HUMANITY.

As shown by public institutions—*e.g.*, the fire brigade, lifeboat, lighthouses, hospitals, asylums, Red-Cross Society.

3. HONOUR.

- (a) In the eyes of others : trustworthiness.

(b) In the eyes of self : self-respect.

(c) Avoidance of false pride.

4. JUSTICE.

(a) To others—*e.g.*, not to spread infection.

(b) Avoidance of cruelty to animals in pursuit of fashion, amusement, cruel sports—*e.g.*, egret's feathers, the bearing-rein, pigeon-shooting, the docking of horses' tails.

(c) The justification for restraint and punishment in the home and the school.

5. TRUTHFULNESS.

(a) In reporting : correctness ; avoidance of slander and gossip.

(b) In action : candour ; not to act a lie.

(c) In thinking : eagerness for the truth.

(d) Not to shirk a difficulty by a pretence of understanding.

6. PRUDENCE.

(a) Need of forethought and care in speech and action.

(b) Temperance in eating and drinking, in work, and in pleasure.

7. COURAGE.

(a) The importance of courage ; avoidance of bravado.

(b) Presence of mind ; avoidance of panic.

8. WORK.

(a) Pride in thorough work.

(b) Use of leisure time : value of hobbies.

STANDARD V.

(11-12 years.)

1. HABITS.

(a) How acquired.

(b) How cultivated and avoided.

(c) Harmfulness of juvenile smoking.

2. MANNERS.

(a) Courtesy and respect towards all.

(b) Self-restraint.

3. PATRIOTISM.

- (a) Pride in one's school and loyalty to it.
- (b) Duty of local patriotism : how to serve one's town or village.
- (c) The value of local institutions.

4. JUSTICE.

- (a) To all human beings, irrespective of sex, age, creed, social position, nationality, or race ; and to animals, tame and wild.
- (b) Charitableness in thought.
- (c) The value of courts of justice.

5. TRUTHFULNESS.

- (a) Respect for differences of opinion.
- (b) Living for truth ; readiness to receive new truths.
- (c) What men have sacrificed for truth.

6. ZEAL.

- (a) The value of zeal and energy in overcoming difficulties.
- (b) The dangers of misdirected zeal—*e.g.*, bigotry, fanaticism.

7. WORK.

- (a) The necessity for and dignity of labour.
- (b) The earning of a living : different pursuits—their responsibilities and social value.

8. THRIFT.

- (a) Money : its uses and abuses.
- (b) Economy in little things.
- (c) Wise spending : avoidance of extravagance and wastefulness.

STANDARD VI.

(12-13 years.)

1. MANNERS.

- (a) As shown by dress.
- (b) By choice of friends, literature, and amusements.
- (c) By kindness to younger children.
- (d) In boys : by special courtesy to all women and girls.

2. COURAGE.

- (a) Heroic deeds done in the service of man : self-sacrifice.

(b) Everyday heroism.

(c) Chivalry : devotion of the strong to the weak.

(d) Moral courage.

3. PATRIOTISM.

(a) Love of country : national emblems.

(b) What our forefathers have earned for us—*e.g.*, liberty, social and political institutions.

(c) How each individual may serve his country and posterity.

(d) The Sovereign : his power, influence, and responsibilities.

4. PEACE AND WAR.

(a) The value of peace and her victories.

(b) The duty of citizens in time of war.

(c) The evils of war.

5. JUSTICE.

(a) Love of justice.

(b) Just and unjust relations between employers and employed.

(c) The rights of animals.

6. OWNERSHIP.

Talents and opportunities : responsibility for their use.

7. THRIFT.

(a) How and why to save : Savings Banks.

(b) The cost of drink to the nation.

8. TRUTHFULNESS.

(a) Conquest of science over ignorance and superstition.

(b) Progress of truth.

(c) Love of truth.

9. CONSCIENCE.

(a) The claims of conscience (individual and social).

(b) The enlightenment of conscience.

(c) The development of conscience.

STANDARD VII.

(13-14 years.)

1. PATRIOTISM.

(a) The vote : its nature and responsibilities.

(b) Local government.

- (c) The nation and its government.
- (d) Society as an organism : its development through the family, tribe, and nation.
- (e) Universal brotherhood.

2. PEACE AND WAR.

- (a) International relations : how nations can help each other.
- (b) Value of arbitration.

3. JUSTICE.

- (a) The development of the idea of justice from the earliest times.
- (b) The development of the humane spirit in laws.
- (c) The development of the idea of equality.

4. OWNERSHIP.

- (a) Individual and collective ownership.
- (b) Responsibilities of ownership.
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